UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
3 1761 00596316 0

To Helen McCauley

with his author's love

Robert Ross

October 8th. 1911

MASQUES AND PHASES

First Impression . . . . *Oct.* 1909.
Second Impression . . . . *Nov.* 1909.
Third Impression Revised . . . *Dec.* 1909.

LE
R(8)255Am
173

MASQUES & PHASES

BY
ROBERT Baldwin ROSS

394566
3.7.41

LONDON:
ARTHUR L. HUMPHREYS
187 PICCADILLY, W.
1909

LIBRARY
MAR 23 1970
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

PR
6035
O746M3

The author wishes to express his indebtedness, to Messrs. Smith, Elder for leave to reproduce 'A Case at the Museum,' which appeared in the *Cornhill* of October, 1900; to the Editor of the *Westminster Gazette*, which first published the account of Simeon Solomon; and to the former proprietors of the Wilsford Press, for kindly allowing other articles to be here reissued. 'How we Lost the Book of Jasher' and 'The Brand of Isis' were contributed to two undergraduate publications, *The Spirit Lamp* and *The Oxford Point of View*.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
THE DEDICATION (an introduction)	ix
A CASE AT THE MUSEUM (an autopsy)	1
THE BRAND OF ISIS (a study)	33
HOW WE LOST THE BOOK OF JASHER (from a book of memoirs)	47
THE HOOTAWA VANDYCK (a mystery)	69
THE ELEVENTH MUSE (a rehabilitation)	83
SWINBLAKE (a prophetic book with home zarathrusts)	91
A MISLAID POET (a tribute)	103
GOING UP TOP (a round game)	116
MR. BENSON'S 'PATER' (an imaginary portrait)	125
SIMEON SOLOMON (a biography)	135
AUBREY BEARDSLEY (a retrospect)	148
ENGLISH AESTHETICS (a note of exclamation)	156
NON ANGELI SED ANGLI (a capitulation)	162
MR. HOLMAN HUNT AT THE LEICESTER GALLERIES (an inspection)	172

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
The Eclectic at Large (an introspection)	181
Ego et Max Meus (a conversation)	188
The Ethics of Reviewing (a parable)	197
A Little Doctored Faust (a poetical drama)	209
Shavians from Superman (a sequel)	224
Some Doctored Dilemma (a new epilogue)	236
The Jaded Intellectuals (a duologue)	248
Abbey Thoughts (a contemplation)	256
The Elethian Muse (a pendant)	265
There is no Decay (a lecture)	275

To

HAROLD CHILD, Esq.

THE DEDICATION.

My Dear Child,

It is not often the privilege of a contributor to address his former editor in so fatherly a fashion; yet it is appropriate because you justified an old proverb in becoming, if I may say so, my literary parent. Though I had enjoyed the hospitality, I dare not say the welcome, of more than one London editor, you were the first who took off the bearing-rein from my frivolity. You allowed me that freedom, of manner and matter, which I have only experienced in undergraduate periodicals. It is not any lack of gratitude to such distinguished editors as the late Mr. Henley; or Mr. Walter Pollock, who first accorded me the courtesies of print in a periodical not distinguished for its courtesy; or Professor C. J. Holmes, who has occasionally endured me with patience in the *Burlington Magazine*; or Mr. Edmund Gosse, to whom I

am under special obligations; that I address myself particularly to you. But I, who am not frightened of many things, have always been frightened of editors. I am filled with awe when I think of the ultramarine pencil that is to delete my ultramontane views. You were, as I have hinted, the first to abrogate its use in my favour. When you, if not Consul, were at least Plancus, I think the only thing you ever rejected of mine was an essay entitled 'Editors, their Cause and Cure.' It is not included, for obvious reasons, in the present volume, of which you will recognise most of the contents. These may seem even to your indulgent eyes a trifle miscellaneous and disconnected. Still there is a thread common to all, though I cannot claim for them uniformity. There is no strict adherence to those artificial divisions of literature into fiction, essay, criticism, and poetry. Count Tolstoy, however, has shown us that a novel may be an essay rather than a story. No less a writer than Swift used the medium of fiction for his most brilliant criticism of life; his fables, apart from their satire, are often mere essays. Plato, Sir Thomas More,

William Morris, and Mr. H. G. Wells have not disdained to transmit their philosophy under the domino of romance or myth. Some of the greatest poets—Ruskin and Pater for example—have chosen prose for their instrument of expression. If that theory is true of literature—and I ask you to accept it as true—how much truer is it of journalism, at least such journalism as mine; though I see a great gulf between literature and journalism far greater than that between fiction and essay-writing. The line, too, dividing the poetry of Keats from the prose of Sir Thomas Browne is far narrower, in my opinion, than the line dividing Pope from Tennyson. And I say this mindful of Byron's scornful couplet and the recent animadversions of Lord Morley.

There are essays in my book cast in the form of fiction; criticism cast in the form of parody; and a vein of high seriousness sufficiently obvious, I hope, behind the masques and phases of my jesting. The psychological effects produced by works of art and archæology, by drama and books, on men and situations—such are the themes of these passing observations.

And though you find them like an old patchwork quilt I hope you will laugh, in token of your acceptance, if not of the book at least of my lasting regard and friendship for yourself.

Ever yours,

ROBERT ROSS.

5 Hertford Street, Mayfair, W.

MASQUES AND PHASES

A CASE AT THE MUSEUM.

IT is a common error to confuse the archæologist with the mere collector of ignoble trifles, equally pleased with an unusual postage stamp or a scarce example of an Italian primitive. Nor should the impertinent curiosity of local antiquaries, which sees in every disused chalk-pit traces of Roman civilisation, be compared with the rare predilection requisite for a nobler pursuit. The archæologist preserves for us those objects which time has forgotten and passing fashion rejected; in the museums he buries our ancient eikons, where they become impervious to neglect, praise, or criticism; while the collector—a malicious atavist unless he possess accidental perceptions—merely rescues the mistakes of his forefathers, to crowd public galleries with an inconsequent lumber which a better taste has taught us to despise.

In the magic of escaped conventions surely none is more powerful than the Greek, and even now, though we yawn over the enthusiasm of the Renaissance mirrored in our more cadenced prose, there are some who can still catch the delightful contagion which seized the princes and philosophers of Europe in that Martin's Summer of Middle Age.

Of the New Learning already become old, Professor Lachsyrma is reputed a master. Scarcely any one in England holds a like position. He is sixty, and, though his youth is said to have been eventful, he hardly looks his age. He speaks English with a delightful accent, and there always hangs about his presence a melancholy halo of mystery and Italy. His quiet unassumed familiarity with every museum and library on the Continent astonishes even the most erudite Teuton. Among archæologists he is thought a pre-eminent palæographer, among palæographers a great archæologist. I have heard him called the Furtwängler of Britain. His facsimiles and collated texts of the classics are familiar throughout the world. He has independent

means, and from time to time entertains English and foreign *cognoscenti* with elegant simplicity at his wonderful house in Kensington. His conversation is more informing than brilliant. Yet you may detect an unaccountable melancholy in his voice and manner, attributed by the irreverent to his constant visits to the Museum. Religious people, of course, refer to his loss of faith at Oxford; for I regret to say the Professor has been an habitual free-thinker these many years.

However it may be, Professor Lachsyrma is sad, and has not yet issued his edition of the newly discovered poems of Sappho unearthed in Egypt some time since—an edition awaited so impatiently by poets and scholars.

Some years ago, on retiring from his official appointment, Professor Lachsyrma, being a married man, searched for some apartment remote from his home, where he might work undisturbed at labours long since become important pleasures. You cannot grapple with uncials, cursives, and the like in a domestic environment. The preparation of facsimiles, transcripts, and palæographical observations, reports of excavations and

catalogues, demands isolation and complete immunity from the trivialities of social existence.

In a large Bloomsbury studio he found a retreat suitable to his requirements. The uninviting entrance, up a stone staircase leading immediately from the street, was open till nightfall, the rest of the house being used for storage by second-hand dealers in Portland Street. No one slept on the premises, but a caretaker came at stated intervals to light fires and close the front door; for which, however, the Professor owned a pass-key, each room having, as in modern flats, an independent door that might be locked at pleasure. The general gloom of the building never tempted casual callers. The Professor purposely abstained from the decoration or even ordinary furnishing of his chamber. The whitewashed walls were covered with dust-bitten maps, casts of bas-reliefs, engravings of ruins. Behind the door were stacked huge packing-cases containing the harvest of a recent journey to the eastern shores of the Mediterranean. Along one wall mutilated statues and torsos were promiscuously mounted on trestles or temporary

pedestals made of inverted wooden boxes. Above them a large series of shelves bulging with folios, manuscript notebooks, pamphlets, and catalogues ran up to the window, which faced north-east, admitting a strong top-light through panes of ground glass; the lower sash was hidden by permanent blinds in order to shut out all view of the opposite houses and the street below. A long narrow table occupied the centre of the room. It was always strewn with magnifying-glasses, proofs, printers' slips, negatives—the litter of a palæographic student. There were three or four wooden chairs for the benefit of scholarly friends, and an armchair upholstered in green rep near the stove. In a corner stood the most striking, perhaps the only striking, object in the room—a huge mummy from the Fayyûm. The canopic jars and outer coffins belonging to it were still unpacked in the freight cases. It had been purchased from a bankrupt Armenian dealer in Cairo along with a number of Græco-Egyptian antiquities and papyri, of far greater interest to the Professor than the mummy itself. As soon as the interior was examined it was to be presented to the Museum; but more

entertaining and important studies delayed its removal. For many months, with a curious grave smile, the face on the shell seemed to look down with amused and permanent interest on Professor Lachsyrma struggling with the orthography of some forgotten scribe, and arguing with a friend on mutilated or corrupt passages in a Greek palimpsest.

Here, late one afternoon, Professor Lachsyrma was deciphering some yellow leaves of papyrus. The dusk was falling, and he laid down the pen with which he was delicately transcribing uncials on sheets of foolscap, in order to light a lamp on the table. It was 6.30 by an irritating little American clock recently presented him by one of his children, noisy symbol and only indication that he held commune with a modern life he so heartily despised. As the housekeeper entered with some tea he took up a copy of a morning paper (a violent transition from uncials), and glanced at the first lines of the leader:

The Trustees of the British Museum announce one of the most sensational literary discoveries in recent years, a discovery which must startle the world of scholars, and even the apathetic public at large. This

is none other than the recovery of the long-lost poems of Sappho, manuscripts of which were last heard of in the tenth century, when they were burnt at Rome and Byzantium. We shall have to go back to the fifteenth century, to the Fall of Constantinople, to the Revival of Learning, ere we can find a fitting parallel to match the importance of this recent find. Not since the spade of the excavator uncovered from its shroud of earth the flawless beauty of the Olympian Hermes has such a delightful acquisition been made to our knowledge of Greek literature. The name of Professor Lachsyrma has long been one to conjure with, and all of us should experience pleasure (where surprise in his case is out of the question) on learning that his recent tour to Egypt, besides greatly benefiting his health, was the means of restoring to eager posterity one of the most precious monuments of Hellenic culture.

'Dear me, I had no idea the press could be so entertaining,' thought the Professor, as a smile of satisfaction spread over his well-chiselled face. Archæologists are not above reading personal paragraphs and leaders about themselves, though current events do not interest them. So absorbing is their pursuit of antiquity that they are obliged to affect a plausible indifference and a refined ignorance about modern affairs. Nor are they very

generous members of the community. Perhaps dealing in dead gods, perpetually handling precious objects which have ceased to have any relation to life, or quarrelling about languages no one ever uses, blunts their sensibilities. At all events, they have none of that loyalty distinguishing members of other learned professions. The canker of jealousy eats perpetually at their hearts.

Professor Lachsyrma was too well endowed by fortune to grudge his former colleagues their little incomes or inadequate salaries at the Museum. Still, his recent discovery would not only enhance his fame in the learned world and his reputed *flair* for manuscripts—it would irritate those rivals in England and Germany who, in the more solemn reviews, resisted some of his conclusions, canvassed his facts, and occasionally found glaring errors in his texts. How jealous the discovery would make young Fairleigh, for all his unholy knowledge of Greek vases, his handsome profile, and his predilection for going too frequently into society!—a taste not approved by other officials. How it would anger old Gully! Professor Lachsyrma drank some more tea with further satisfaction.

Sappho herself could not have felt more elated on the completion of one of her odes; we know she was poignant and sensitive. Thus for a whole hour he idled with his thoughts—rare occupation for so industrious a man. He was startled from the reverie by a slight knock at his door.

'Come in,' he said coldly. There was a touch of annoyance in his tone. Visitors, frequent enough in the morning, rarely disturbed him in the afternoon.

'To whom have I the—duty of speaking?' He raised his well-preserved spare form to its full height. The long loose alpaca coat, velvet skull-cap, and pointed beard gave him the appearance of an eminent ecclesiastic.

The subdued light in the room presented only a dim figure on the threshold, and the piercing eyes of the Professor could only see a blurred white face against the black frame of the open door. A strange voice replied:

'I am sorry to disturb you, Professor Lachsyrma. I shall not detain you for more than—an hour.'

'If you will kindly write and state the nature of your business, I can give you an

appointment to-morrow or the day after. At the present moment, you will observe, I am busy. I never see visitors except by appointment.'

'I am sorry to inconvenience you. Necessity compels me to choose my own hours for interviewing any one.'

The Professor then suddenly removed the green cardboard shade from the lamp. The discourteous intruder was now visible for his inspection.

He was a fair man of uncertain age, but could not be more than twenty-eight. He wore his flaxen hair rather long and ill-kempt; his face might have been handsome, but the flesh was white and flaccid; the features, though regular, devoid of character; the blue eyes had so little expression that a professed physiognomist would have found difficulty in 'placing' their possessor. His black clothes were shiny with age; his gait was shuffling and awkward.

'My name, though it will not convey very much to you, is Frank Carrel. I am a scholar, an archæologist, a palæographer, and—other things besides.'

'A beggar and a British Museum reader,' was the mental observation of the Professor. The other seemed to read his thoughts.

'You think I want pecuniary assistance; well, I do.'

'I fear you have come to the wrong person, at the wrong time, and if I may say so, in the wrong way. I do not like to be disturbed at this hour. Will you kindly leave me this instant?'

Carrel's manner changed and became more deferential.

'If you will allow me to show you something on which I want your opinion, something I can leave with you, I will go away at once and come back to-morrow at any time you name.'

'Very well,' said the Professor, wearily, ready to compromise the matter for the moment.

From a small bag he was carrying Carrel produced a roll of papyrus, The Professor's eyes gleamed; he held out his hands greedily to receive it, fixing a searching, suspicious glance on Carrel.

'Where did you get this, may I ask?'

'I want your opinion first, and then I will tell you.'

The Professor moved towards the lamp, replaced the cardboard green shade, sat down, and with a strong magnifying-glass examined the papyrus with evident interest. Carrel, appreciating the interest he was exciting, talked on in rapid jerky sentences.

'Yes. I think you will be able to help me. I am sure you will do so. Like yourself, I am a scholar, and might have occupied a position in Europe similar to your own.'

The Professor smiled grimly, but did not look up from the table as Carrel continued:

'Mine has been a strange career. I was educated abroad. I became a scholar at Cambridge. There was no prize I did not carry off. I knew more Greek than both Universities put together. Then I was cursed not only with inclination for vices, but with capacity and courage to practise them—liquor, extravagance, gambling—amusements for rich people; but I was poor.'

'It is a very sad and a very common story,' said the Professor sententiously, but without looking up from the table. 'I myself was an

Oxford man. Your name is quite unfamiliar to me.'

'I fancy if you asked them at Cambridge they would certainly remember me.'

'I shall make a point of doing so,' said the Professor drily. He affected to be giving only partial attention to the narrative; but though he seemed to be sedulous in his examination of the papyrus, he was listening intently.

'I was a great disappointment to the Dons,' Carrel said with a short laugh, and he lit a cigarette with all the swagger of an undergraduate.

'And to your parents?' queried Lachsyrma.

'My mother was dead. I don't exactly know who my father was. I fear these details bore you, however. To-morrow——' he added satirically.

'A very romantic story, no doubt,' said the Professor, rising from his chair, 'and it interests me—moderately; but before we go on any further, I will be candid with you. That papyrus is a forgery—a very clever forgery, too. I wonder why the writer tried Euripides; we have almost enough of him.'

'So do I sometimes,' returned Carrel cheerfully. The Professor arched his eyebrows in surprise.

He removed the green cardboard lampshade to keep his equivocal visitor under strict observation.

'If you knew it was a forgery, why did you waste my time and your own in bringing it here? In order to tell me a long story about yourself, which if true is extraordinarily dull?'

It is almost an established convention for experts to be rude when they have given an adverse opinion on anything submitted to them. It gives weight to their statements. In the present case, however, the Professor was really annoyed.

'I wanted to know if you recognised the papyrus,' said Carrel, and he smiled disingenuously. The Professor was startled.

'Yes; it was offered to me in Cairo last winter by a German dealer in antiquities. I recognised it at once. May I felicitate the talented author?'

'No. You would have been taken in if I were the author.'

Professor Lachsyrma waved a white hand, loaded with scarabs and gems, in a deprecatory, patronising manner towards Carrel.

'I must apologise if I have wronged you. I am hardened to these little amenities between brother palæographers. Envy, jealousy, call it what you will, attacks those in high places. There may be unrecognised artists, mute inglorious Miltons, Chattertons starving in garrets, Shakespeares in the workhouse, while dull modern productions are applauded on the silly English stage, and poetasters are crowned by the Academies; but believe me that in Archæology, in the deciphering of manuscripts, the quack is detected immediately. The science has been carried to such a state of perfection that, if our knowledge is still unhappily imperfect, our materials inadequate, the public recognition of our services quite out of proportion to our labours, there is now no permanent place for the charlatan or the forger. The first would do better as an art critic for the daily papers; the other might turn his attention to the simple necessary cheque, or the safer and more enticing Bank of England

note. If you are an honest expert, there is a wide field for your talents; and if I do not believe you to be anything of the kind, you have yourself to blame for my scepticism. You came here without an introduction, without any warning of your arrival. You refuse to leave my room. You inform me that you want money with a candour unusual among beggars. You then ask me to inspect a forged manuscript which you either know or suspect me to have seen before. Should you have no explanation to offer for this outrageous intrusion, may I ask you to leave the premises immediately?'

As he finished this somewhat pompous harangue he pointed menacingly towards the door. He was slightly nervous, for Carrel, who was sitting down, remained seated, his hands folded, gazing up with an insolent childish stare. He might have been listening to an eloquent preacher whom he thoroughly despised.

'Professor Lachsyrma,' Carrel said in a sweet winning voice, 'I will go away if you like now, but I have nearly finished my errand and we may as well dispatch an affair tiresome

to both of us, this evening, instead of postponing it. I want you to give me 1000*l.*'

The Professor rubbed his eyes. Was he dreaming? Was this some elaborate practical joke? Was it the confidence trick? He seemed to lose his self-possession, gaped on Carrel for some seconds, then controlled himself.

'And why should I give you 1000*l.*?'

'I am a blackmailer. I am a forger of manuscripts. I have more Greek in my little finger than you have in your long body. I began to tell you my history. I thought it might interest you. I do not propose to burden you with it any further. To-night I ask you for 1000*l.*, to-morrow I shall ask you for 2000*l.*, and the day after——'

'The Sibyl was scarcely so extortionate when she offered the Tarquin literary wares that no subsequent research with which I am acquainted has proved to be spurious. And you, Mr. Carrel, offer me forgeries—merely forgeries.'

Fear expressed itself in clumsy satire. He was thoroughly alarmed. He began rapidly to review his own antecedents, and to scrape

his memory for discreditable incidents. He could think of nothing he need feel ashamed of, nothing the world might not thoroughly investigate. There were mean actions, but many generous ones to balance in the scale.

His knowledge of life was really slight, as his intimacy with Archæology (so he told himself) was profound. One foolish incident, a midsummer madness, before he went to Oxford, was all he had to blush for. This, he frequently confessed, not without certain pride, to his wife, the daughter of a respectable man of letters from Massachusetts. He firmly and privately believed an omission in a catalogue a far greater sin than a breach of the Decalogue. But ethics are of little consequence where conduct is above reproach. When buying antiquities he would come across odd people from time to time, but never any one who openly avowed himself a blackmailer and a forger. The novel experience was embarrassing and unpleasant, but there was really little to fear. In all the delight of a clear conscience, since Carrel vouchsafed no reply to his sardonic Sibylline allusion, he said:

You have advanced no reason why I should hand you to-day or to-morrow these modest sums you demand.'

'Then I will tell you,' said Carrel, standing up suddenly. 'I fabricated the poems of Sappho,—yes, the manuscript from which *you* are reaping so much credit'—he took up the newspaper—'from the morning press. When I take to art criticism, as you kindly suggested a dishonest man might do, it will be of a livelier description than any to which you are usually accustomed. Vain dupe, you think yourself impeccable. Infallible ass, there is hardly a museum in Europe where my manuscripts are not carefully preserved for the greatest and rarest treasures by senile curators, too ignorant to know their errors or too vain to acknowledge them. I fancied you clever; until now I do not know that I ever caught you out, though you may have bought many of my wares for all I know. I find you, however, like the rest—dull, pedantic, and Pecksniffian. At Cambridge we were not taught pretty manners, but we knew enough not to give fellowships to pretentious charlatans like yourself.'

The room swam round Professor Lachsyrma, and the mummy behind the door grinned. The plaster casts and the statues seemed to wave their mutilated limbs with the joy of demoniacal possession. Dead things were startled into life. Sick giddiness permeated his brain. It was some horrible nightmare. Yet his soul's tempest was entirely subjective; outwardly his demeanour suffered no change. His tormentor noted with astonishment and admiration his apparent self-control. There was merely a slight falter in his speech.

'What proofs have you? A blackmailer must have some token—something on which to base a ridiculous libel.'

'A few minutes ago I handed you a spurious papyrus, which you tell me you recognise. In the same lot of rubbish, purporting to come from the Fayyûm, were the alleged poems of Sappho. You swallowed the bait which has waited for you so long, and, if it is any consolation to you, I will admit that in the opinion of the profession, to continue my piscatorial simile, I have landed the largest salmon.'

'I am deeply sensible of the compliment, but I must point out to you, my friend, that

your coming to tell me that a papyrus I happen to have purchased from one of your shady friends is counterfeit, does not necessarily prove it to be so.'

The Professor realised that he must act cautiously, and consider his position quietly. Each word must be charged with suppressed meaning. His eyes wandered over the room, resting now and again on the majestic, impassive smile of the mummy. It seemed to restore his nerve. He found himself unconsciously looking towards it over Carrel's head each time he spoke. While the blackmailer, seated once more, gazed up to his face with a defiant, insolent stare, swinging his chair backwards and forwards, unconcerned at the length of the interview, apparently careless of its issue. The Professor brooded on the terrible chagrin, the wounded vanity of discovering himself the victim of an obviously long-contrived hoax. At his asking for a proof, Carrel laughed.

'You are sceptical at last,' he sneered. 'I have the missing portions of the papyrus here with me. You can have them for a song. I was afraid to leave the roll too complete, lest I

should invite detection. It would be a pity to let them go to some other museum. Berlin is longing for a new acquisition.'

Then he produced from his bag damning evidence of the truth of his story—deftly confected sheets of papyrus, brown with the months it had taken to fabricate them, and cracked with forger's inks and acids—ghastly replicas of the former purchase. Nervously the Professor replaced the green cardboard shade over the lamp, as though the glare affected his eyes.

'But how do you know I have not discovered the forgery already?' he said, craftily. Carrel started. 'And see what I am sending to the press this evening,' he added.

Walking to the end of the table, he picked up a sheet of paper where there was writing, and another object which Carrel could not see in the gloom, so quickly and adroitly was the action accomplished.

'Shall I read it to you, or will you read it yourself?'

He advanced again towards the lamp, held the paper in the light, and beckoned to Carrel, who leant over the table to see what was writ-

ten. Then Professor Lachsyrma plunged a long Greek knife into his back. A toreador could hardly have done it more skilfully; the bull was pinned through the heart, and expired instantaneously.

. . . . .

Now he paced the room in deep thought. For the first time he found himself an actor in modern life, which hitherto for him meant digging among excavations, or making romantic restoration for jaded connoisseurs, of some faultless work of art described by Pausanias and hidden for centuries beneath the rubbish of modern Greece. The entire absence of horror appalled him. Even the dignity of tragedy was not there. He was wrestling with hideous melodrama, often described to him by patrons of Thespian art at transpontine theatres. The vulgarity—the anachronism—made him shudder. Having till now ignored the issue of the present, he began to be sceptical about the virtues of antiquity. Antiquity, his only religion, his god, whose mangled incompleteness endeared it to him, was crumbling away. He wondered if there were friends with whom he might share his

ugly secret. There was young Fairleigh, who was always so modern, and actually read modern books. *He* might have coped with the blackmailer alive, but hardly with his corpse. You cannot run round and ask neighbours for coffins, false beards, and rope in the delightful convention of the *Arabian Nights*, because you have grazed modern life at a sharp angle, without exciting suspicion or running the risk of positive refusal. There was his wife, to whom he confided everything; but she was a lady from Massachusetts, and her father was European correspondent to many American papers of the highest repute. How could their pure ears be soiled with so sordid a confidence? Poor Irene! she was to have an 'At Home' the following afternoon. It would have to be postponed. Professor Lachsyrma fell to thinking of such trivial matters, contemptible in their unimportance, as we do at the terrible moments of our lives. He wondered if they would wait dinner for him. He often remained at his club—the Serapeum—to finish a discussion with some erudite antagonist. His absence would therefore cause no alarm. He consulted the little

American clock; it had stopped. How like America! The only recorded instance, he would explain to Irene, of an export from that country being required—the commodity proved inadequate. No, that would make Irene cry. . . . The folly of hopeless, futile thoughts jingled on. Suddenly he heard the cry of a belated newsvendor, howling some British victory, some horrible scandal in Paris. Scandal, exposure, publicity—*there* was the horror. He could almost hear the journalists stropping their pens. If his thoughts drifted towards any potential expiation demanded by officialism, he put them aside. A social *débâcle* was more fearful and vivid than the dock and its inevitable consequence. . . . Presently his eyes rested again on the mummy case. A brilliant inspiration! Here, at all events, was a temporary hiding-place for the corpse of the blackmailer. If it was putting new wine into old bottles, circumstances surely justified a violation of the proverb. Till now a severe unromantic Hellenist, he held Egyptology in some contempt; and for Egypt, except in so far as it illustrated the art of Greece or remained a treasure-house for Greek manuscripts,

his distaste was only surpassed by that of the Prophet Isaiah. A bias so striking in the immortal Herodotus is hardly shared by your modern encyclopædist. While the science of Egyptology and its adepts command rather awe and wonder than sympathy from the uninitiated, who keep their praises for the more attractive study of Greek art. Yet some of us still turn with relief from the serene material masterpieces of Greece, soulless in their very realism and truth of expression, to the vague and happily unexplained monsters, the rigid gods and hieratic princes, who are given new names by each succeeding generation. A knowledge that behind painted masks and gilded, tawdry gew-gaws are the remains of a once living person gives even the mummy a human interest denied to the most exquisite handiwork of Pheidias.

Professor Lachsyrma at present felt only the impossibility of a situation that would have been difficult for many a weaker man to face. Humiliation overwhelms the strongest. Modern agencies for the concealment of a body having failed to suggest themselves, he must needs fall back on the despised expedient

of Egypt. Palæography and Greek art were obviously useless in the present instance. He understood at last why deplorable people wanted to abolish Greek from the University curriculum.

The coffin was of varnished sycamore wood, ornamented on the outside with gods in their shrines and inscriptions relating to the name and titles of the deceased, painted in red and green. The face was carved out of a separate piece of wood, with the conventional beard attached to the chin; the eyelids were of bronze; the eyes of obsidian; wooden hands were crossed on the breast. Inside the lid were pictures of apes in yellow on a purple background, symbolising the Spirits of the East adoring the Gods of the Morning and Evening. The mummy itself was enclosed in a handsome cartonnage case laced up the back. The Professor lifted it gently out on the table, and substituted Carrel's body. He staunched as he best could the blood which trickled on to the glaring pictures of the Judgment of Osiris and the goddess Nut imparting the Waters of Life; then he turned to examine the former occupant, whom two thousand years even at such

a moment endowed with a greater interest than could attach to the corpse of a defunct blackmailer. It now occurred to him that he might profitably utilise the mummy cerements along with the coffin for more effectually concealing Carrel's body until he could arrange for its final disposal. He hastened to carry his idea into effect.

The cartonnage case, composed of waste papyrus fragments glued together, was painted with figures of deities. The face was a gilded mask, on the headdress were lotus flowers, and the collar was studded to imitate precious stones. Over the breast were representations of Horus, Apis, and Thoth, and lower down the dead man was seen on his bier attended by Anubis and the children of Horus, while the soul in the form of a hawk hovered above. The Professor observed that an earlier method had been employed for the preservation and protection of the body than is usually found among Ptolemaic mummies.

Beneath a network of blue porcelain bugles and a row of sepulchral gods suspended by a wire to the neck was a dusky, red-hued sheet, sewn at the head and feet and fastened with

brown strips of linen. Under this last shroud were the bandages which swathed the actual corpse, inscribed with passages from the Book of the Dead, the mysterious fantastic directions for the life hereafter. The symbolism requisite for the external decoration of the mummy had been scrupulously executed by skilful artists, and the conscientious method of wrapping again indicated the pristine mode of embalmment practised when the craft was at its zenith, long before the Greek conquest of Egypt.

A considerable time was occupied in unrolling the three or four hundred yards of linen. Meanwhile a strange fragrance of myrrh, cassia, cinnamon, the sweet spices and aromatic unguents used in embalming, filled the room. Gradually the yellow skin preserved by the natron began to appear through the cross-hatchings of the bandages. Attached to a thick gold wire round the neck and placed over the heart was a scarab of green basalt, mounted in a gold setting; and on the henna-stained little finger of the left hand was another of steatite. As the right arm was freed from its artificially tightened grasp a peculiar wooden cylinder rolled on to the floor

into the heap of scented mummy dust and bandages.

Languidly inquisitive, Professor Lachsyrma groped for it. Such objects are generally found beneath the head. There was a seal at each end, both of which he broke. A roll of papyrus was inside. He trembled, and with forced deliberation made for the table, his knees tottering from exhaustion. Excitement at this unexpected discovery made him forget Carrel. The ghastly events of the evening were for the moment blotted from his memory. After all, he was a palæographer —an archæologist first, a murderer afterwards. Eagerly, painfully, he began to read, adjusting his spectacles from time to time, the muscles of his face twitching with anxiety and expectation. For a long time the words were strange to him. Suddenly his glasses became dim. There were tears in his eyes; he was reading aloud, unconsciously to himself, the beautiful verses familiar to all students of Greek poetry:—

Οἷον τὸ γλυκύμαλον ἐρεύθεται ἄκρῳ ἐπ' ὕσδῳ
ἄκρον ἐπ' ἀκροτάτῳ· λελάθοντο δὲ μαλοδρόπηες,
οὐ μὰν ἐκλελάθοντ', ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐδύναντ' ἐφίκεσθαι—

and to students of English, in the marvellous rendering of them by the late Mr. Rossetti:

'Like the sweet apple which reddens upon the topmost bough,
A-top on the topmost twig,—which the pluckers forgot, somehow,—
Forgot it not, nay, but got it not, for none could get it till now.'

The papyrus was of great length, and contained the poems of Sappho in a cursive literary handwriting of the third century—the real poems, lost to the world for over eight hundred years. It was morning now—a London spring morning; dawn was creeping through the great north-east light of the studio; birds were twittering outside. The murderer sobbed hysterically.

* * * * *

On referring to 'Euterpe,' the second book of the Histories of Herodotus, Professor Lachsyrma selected the second method of embalming as less troublesome and more expeditious. The whole matter lasted little longer than the seventy prescribed days. At the end of which time he was able, in accordance with his original intention, to de-

posit in a handsome glass case at the British Museum the Mummy of Heliodorus, a Greek settler in Egypt who held some official appointment at the Court of Ptolemy Philadelphus. It is described in the catalogue as one of the best examples of its kind in Europe. Indeed, it is probably unique.

Professor Lachsyrma often pauses before the case when visiting our gaunt House of Art. Even the policeman on duty has noticed this peculiarity, and smiles respectfully. The Professor has ceased to ridicule Egyptology; and his confidence in the resources and sufficiency of antiquity, so rudely shaken for one long evening, is completely re-established.

To S. S. Spriggs, Esq., M.D.

THE BRAND OF ISIS.

'Videant irreligiosi videant et errorem suum recognoscant. En ecce pristinis aerumnis absolutus, Isidis magnae providentia gaudens Lucius de sua fortuna triumphat.' APULEIUS.

'Her image comes into the gloom
With her pale features moulded fair,
Her breathing beauty, morning bloom,
My heart's delight, my tongue's despair.' BINYON.

'An Oxford scholar of family and fortune; but quaint and opinionated, despising every one who has not had the benefit of an University education.' RICHARDSON.

Τρόπῳ δὲ ζόης τοιῷδε διαχρέωνται, πατρίοσι δὲ χρεώμενοι νόμοισι ἄλλον οὐδένα ἐπικτέωνται. HERODOTUS.

I ONCE had the good fortune to take down to dinner a young American lady of some personal attractions. Her vivacity and shrewdness were racial; her charm peculiar to herself. Her conversation consisted in a rather fierce denunciation of Englishmen, young Oxford Englishmen in particular. Their thoughts, their dress, their speech, their airs of superiority offended one brought up with that Batavian type of humanity, the American youth, to whom we have nothing exactly corresponding in this country except among drawing-room conjurors. But I was startled at her keen observation when I inquired with a smile

how she knew I was not an Oxford man myself.

'Had you been one, you would never have listened to what I have been saying,' she retorted. Rather nettled, I challenged her to pick out from the other guests those on whom she detected the brand of Isis. A pair of gloves was the prize for each successful guess. She won seven; in fact all the stakes during the course of the evening. Over one only she hesitated, and when he mentioned that he had neither the curiosity nor the energy to cross the Atlantic, she knew he came from Oxford.

Yes, there is something in that manner after all. It irritates others besides Americans. Novelists try to describe it. We all know the hero who talks English with a Balliol accent—that great creature who is sometimes bow and sometimes cox of his boat on alternate evenings; who puts the weight at the University Sports and conducts the lady home from a College wine without a stain on her character; is rusticated for a year or so; returns to win the Newdigate and leaves without taking a degree. Or that other delightful abstraction—he has a Balliol

accent too—with literary tastes and artistic rooms, where gambling takes place. He is invariably a coward, but dreadfully fascinating all the same; though he scorns women he has an hypnotic influence over them; something in his polished Oxford manner is irresistible. Throughout a career of crime his wonderful execution on the piano, his knowledge of Italian painting, and his Oxford manner never seem to desert him. We feel, not for the first time, how dangerous it must be to allow our simple perky unspoiled Colonials to associate with such deleterious exotic beings, who, though in fiction horsewhipped or (if heroes) shot in the last chapter, in real life are so apt to become prosperous city men or respected college officials.

The Oxford manner is, alas, indefinable; I was going to say indefensible. Perhaps it is an attitude—a mental attitude that finds physical expression in the voice, the gesture, the behaviour. Oxford, not conduct, is three-fourths of life to those who acquire the distemper. Without becoming personal it is not easy to discuss purely social aspects, and we must seek chiefly in literature for

manifestations of the phenomenon: in the prose of Matthew Arnold for instance—in the poems of Mr. Laurence Binyon, typical examples where every thought seems a mental reservation. Enemies rail at the voice, and the voice counts for something. Any one having the privilege of hearing Mr. Andrew Lang speak in public will know at once what I mean—a pleasure, let me hasten to say, only equalled by the enjoyment of his inimitable writing, so pre-eminently Oxonian when the subject is not St. Andrews, Folk Lore, or cricket. Though Oxford men have their Cambridge moments, and beneath their haughty exterior there sometimes beats a Cambridge heart. Behind such reserve you would never suspect any passions at all save one of pride. Even frankly irreligious Oxford men acquire an ecclesiastical pre-Reformation aloofness which must have piqued Thackeray quite as much as the refusal of the city to send him to Westminster. He complains somewhere that the undergraduates wear kid gloves and drink less wine than their jolly brethren of the Cam. He was thoroughly Cambridge in his attitude towards life, as you

may see when he writes of his favourite eighteenth century in his own fascinating style. How angry he becomes with the vices and corruption of a dead past! Now no Oxford essayist would dream of being angry with the past. How annoyed the sentimental author of *The Four Georges* would be with Mr. Street's genial treatment of the same epoch! It would, however, be the annoyance of a father for his eldest son, whom he sent to Oxford perhaps to show that an old slight was forgiven and forgotten.

There have been, of course, plenty of men unravaged by the blithe contagion. Mr. Gladstone intellectually always seemed to me a Cambridge man in his energy, his enthusiasm, his political outlook. Only in his High Church proclivities is he suspect. The poet Shelley was an obvious Cantab. He was, we are told, a man of high moral character. Well, principles and human weakness are common to all Universities, and others besides Shelley have deserted their wives: but to desert your wife on principle seems to me callous, calculating, and Cambridge-like.

A painful but interesting case came under

my personal observation, and it illustrates the other side of the question. A clever young graduate of my acquaintance, after four years of distinguished scholarship at Oxford, came up to the metropolis and entered the dangerous lists of literature. It is not indiscreet if I say that he belonged to what was quite a brilliant little period—the days of Mr. Eric Parker, Mr. Max Beerbohm, and Mr. Reginald Turner. So there was nothing surprising in his literary tastes, though I believe he was unknown to those masters of prose. He was tall, good-looking, and prepossessing, but his Oxford manner was unusually pronounced. He never expressed disgust—no Oxford man does—only pained surprise at what displeased him; he never censured the morals or manners of people as a Cambridge man might have done. Out of the University pulpit no Oxford man would dream of scolding people for their morals. After a year of failure he fell into a decline. His parents became alarmed. They hinted that his ill success was due to his damned condescension (the father was of course a Cambridge man). I too suggested in a mild

way that a more ingratiating manner might produce better luck with editors. At last his health broke down, and a wise family physician was called in. After studying the case for some months, Aesculapius (he was M.B. of Cambridge) divined that ill success rather than ill health was the provocative; and he related to the patient (this is becoming like an Arabian Night) the following story:

'A certain self-made man, confiding to a friend plans for his son's education, remarked: "Of course I shall send him to Eton." "Why Eton?" said the friend. "Because he is to be a barrister, and if he did not go to Eton no one would speak to him if they knew his poor old father was a self-made man. Then he will go to Cambridge." "Why not Oxford?" said the friend, who was a self-made Oxford tradesman. "Because then he would never speak to me," replied the first self-made man.'

My friend from that moment recovered. He became more tolerant; he became successful. He became a distinguished dramatist. He justified his early promise.

There is in this little story perhaps a charge

of snobbishness from which Oxford men are really entirely free. They are too conscious of their own superiority to be tuft-hunters, and I believe miss some of the prizes of life by their indifference towards those who have already 'arrived.' Yet they appear snobbish to others who have not had the benefit of a University education, and in this little essay I endeavour to hold up the mirror to their ill-nature—the fault to which I am unduly attached. Writers besides Richardson have referred to it. I might quote many eloquent tributes from Dryden to Wordsworth and Byron, all Cambridge men, who have felt the charm and acknowledged a weakness for the step-sister University. Cambridge has never been fortunate in having the compliment reciprocated. Neither Oxford men nor her own sons have been over-generous in her praises: you remember Ruskin on King's Chapel. And I, the obscurest of her children, who cast this laurel on the Isis, will content myself with admitting that I sincerely believe you can obtain a cheaper and better education at Cambridge, though it has always been my ambition to be mistaken for an Oxford man.

I often wonder whether Mr. Cecil Rhodes, while he had the English Government in one pocket, the English Press in the other, and South Africa in the hollow of his hand, felt a certain impotency before Oxford. He had to acknowledge its influence over himself—an influence stronger than Dr. Jameson or the Afrikander Bond. He was never quite sure whether he admired more the loneliness of the Matoppos or the rather over-crowded diamond mines of Kimberley. On the grey veld he used to read *Marius the Epicurean*, and sought in Mr. Pater the key to the mystery he was unable to solve. He turned to the Thirty-nine Articles (more tampered with at Oxford than in any other cathedral city) with the same want of success. That always seems to me a real touch of Oxford in what some one well said, was an 'ugly life.' What a wonderful subject for the brush of a Royal Academician! no ordinary artist could ever do it justice: the great South African statesman on the lonely rocks where he had chosen his tomb; a book has fallen from his hand (Mr. Pater's no doubt); his eyes are gazing from canvas into the future he has peopled with his

dreams. By some clever device of art or nature the clouds in the sky have shaped themselves into Magdalen Tower—into harmony with his thoughts, and the setting sun makes a mandorla behind him. He is thinking of Oxford, and round his head *Oriel* clings as in 'The Blessed Damozel.'

He could terrorise the Colonial Secretary, he could foment a war and add a new empire to England; he could not overcome his love of Oxford, the antithesis of all sordid financial intrigue and political marauding. Athens was after all a dearer name than Groot-Schuurr. He set fire to both.

I speculate sometimes whether the University was aware of his testamentary dispositions before it conferred on him an honorary degree. I hope not. He deserved it as the greatest son of Oxford, the greatest Englishman of his time. Imre Kiralfy, who has done for a whole district of London what Mr. Rhodes tried to do for the empire, is but an *impresario* beside him. A French critic says we cannot admire greatness in England; and this was shown by the timid way a large number of Imperialists, while professing to

believe the war a righteous one, thought they would seem independent if they disclaimed approval of Mr. Rhodes, by not having the pluck to admit the same motives though ready enough to share the plunder. You may compare the ungrateful half-unfriendly obituaries in the press with the leaders a few days later, after the will was opened.

But what immediately concerns us here is the intention of Mr. Rhodes. Was it entirely benevolence, or some wish to test the strength of Oxford—to bring undergraduates into contact with something coarser, some terrific impermeable force that would be manner-proof against Oxford? Would he conquer from the grave? Several Americans have been known to go through the University retaining the Massachusetts *patina*. What if a number of these savages were grafted on Oxford? How would they alter the tone? We shall see. It will be an interesting struggle. Shall we hear of six-shooters in the High?—of hominy and flannel cake for breakfast?—will undergrads look 'spry?'—will they 'voice' public opinion? . . . . I forbear: my American vocabulary is limited. *Outre*

mer, outrés mœurs, as Mr. Walkley might say in some guarded allusion to Paul Bourget. . . . . I shall be sorry to see poker take the place of roulette, and the Christ Church meadows turned into a ranch for priggish cowboys, or Addison's Walk re-named the Cake Walk. But no, I believe Mr. Rhodes, if there was just a touch of malice in his testament, realised that Oxford manners were stronger than the American want of them. Oxford may be wounded, but I have complete confidence in the issue. These Bœotian invaders must succumb, as nobler stock before them. They will form an interesting subject for some exquisite study by Mr. Henry James, who will deal with their gradual civilisation. Preserved in the amber of his art they will become immortal.

I have been able to clip only the fringe of a great theme. Athletes require an essay to themselves. In later age they seem to me more melancholy than their Cambridge peers and less successful. These splendid creatures are really works of art, and form our only substitute for sculpture in the absence of any native plastic talent. From the collector's

point of view they belong to the best period, while the graceful convention of isocephaly, which has raised the standard of height, renders them inapt for the 'battles' of life, however well equipped for those of their College where the cuisine is at all tolerable.

I am not enough of an antiquary to conjecture if there was ever a temple to Isis during the Roman occupation of Britain on the site of the now illustrious University. But I like to imagine that there existed a cultus of the venerable goddess in the green fields where the purple fritillaries, so reminiscent of the lotus, blossom in the early spring. In the curious formal pattern of their petals I see a symbol of the Oxford manner — something archaic, rigid, severe. The Oxford Don may well be a reversion to some earlier type, learned, mystic, and romantic as those priests of whom Herodotus has given us so vivid a picture. The worship of Apis, as Mr. Frazer or Mr. Lang would tell us, becomes then merely the hieroglyph for a social standard, a manner of life. This, I think, will explain the name Oxford on the Isis—the Ford of Apis, the ox-god at this one place able to

pass over the benign deity. You remember, too, the horrid blasphemy of Cambyses (his very name suggests Cambridge), and the vengeance of the gods. So be it to any sacrilegious reformer who would transmute either the Oxford Don or the Oxford undergraduate —the most august of human counsellors, the most delightful of friends.

(1902.)

HOW WE LOST THE BOOK OF JASHER.

EVERYONE who knows anything about art, archæology, or science has heard of the famous FitzTaylor Museum at Oxbridge. And even outsiders who care for none of these things have heard of the quarrels and internal dissensions that have disturbed that usual calm which ought to reign within the walls of a museum. The illustrious founder, to whose munificence we owe this justly famous institution, provided in his will for the support of four curators, who govern the two separate departments of science and art. The University has been in the habit of making grants of money from time to time to these separate departments for the acquisition of scientific or archæological curiosities and MSS. I suppose there was something wrong in the system, but whatever it may be, it led to notorious jealousies and disputes. At the time of which I write, the principal curators of the art

section were Professor Girdelstone and Mr. Monteagle, of Prince's College. I looked after the scientific welfare of the museum with Lowestoft as my understudy—he was practically a nonentity and an authority on lepidoptera. Now, whenever a grant was made to the left wing of the building, as I call it, I always used to say that science was being sacrificed to archæology. I mocked at the illuminated MSS. over which Girdelstone grew enthusiastic, and the musty theological folios purchased by Monteagle. They heaped abuse upon me, of course, when my turn came, and cracked many a quip on my splendid skeleton of the ichthyosaurus, the only known specimen from Greenland. At one time the strife broke into print, and the London press animadverted on our conduct. It became a positive scandal. We were advised, I remember, to wash our dirty linen at home, and though I have often wondered why the press should act as a voluntary laundress on such occasions, I suppose the remark is a just one.

There came a day when we took the advice of the press, and from then until now science

and art have gone hand in hand at the University of Oxbridge. How the breach was healed forms the subject of the present leaf from my memoirs.

America, it has been wisely said, is the great land of fraud. It is the Egypt of the modern world. From America came the spiritualists, from America bogus goods, and cheap ideas and pirated editions, and from America I have every reason to believe came Dr. Groschen. But if his ancestors came from Rhine or Jordan, that he received his education on the other side of the Atlantic I have no doubt. Why he came to Oxbridge I cannot say. He appeared quite suddenly, like a comet. He brought introductions from various parts of the world—from the British Embassy at Constantinople, from the British and German Schools of Archæology at Athens, from certain French Egyptologists at Alexandria, and a holograph letter from Archbishop Sarpedon, Patriarch of Hermaphroditopolis, Curator of the MSS. in the Monastery of St. Basil, at Mount Olympus. It was this last that endeared him, I believe, to the High Church party in Oxbridge. Dr. Groschen was al-

ready the talk of the University, the lion of the hour, before I met him. There was rumour of an honorary degree before I saw him in the flesh, at the high table of my college, a guest of the Provost. If Dr. Groschen did not inspire me with any confidence, I cannot say that he excited any feeling of distrust. He was a small, black, commonplace-looking little man, very neat in his attire, without the alchemical look of most archæologists. Had I known then, as I know now, that he presented his first credentials to Professor Girdelstone, I might have suspected him. Of course, I took it for granted they were friends. When the University was ringing with praises of the generosity of Dr. Groschen in transferring his splendid collections of Greek inscriptions to the FitzTaylor Museum, I rejoiced ; the next grant would be devoted to science, in consideration of the recently enriched galleries of the art and archæological section. I only pitied the fatuity of the authorities for being grateful. Dr. Groschen now wound himself into everybody's good wishes, and the University degree was already conferred. He was offered

a fine set of rooms in a college famous for culture. He became a well-known figure on the Q.P. But he was not always with us; he went to Greece or the East sometimes, for the purpose, it was said, of adding to the Groschen collection, now the glory of the FitzTaylor.

It was after a rather prolonged period of absence that he wrote to Girdelstone privately, announcing a great discovery. On his return he was bringing home, he said, some MSS. recently unearthed by himself in the monastic library of St. Basil, and bought for an enormous sum from Sarpedon, the Patriarch of Hermaphroditopolis. He was willing to sell them to 'some public institution' for very little over the original price. Girdelstone told several of us in confidence. It was public news next day. Scholars grew excited. There were hints at the recovery of a lost MS., which was to 'add to our knowledge of the antique world and materially alter accepted views of the early state of Roman and Greek society.' On hearing the news I smiled. 'Some institution,' that was suspicious—MSS.—they meant forgery

The new treasure was described as a palimpsest, consisting of fifty or sixty leaves of papyrus. On one side was a portion of the *Lost Book of Jasher*, of a date not later than the fourth century; on the other, in cursive characters, the too notorious work of Aulus Gellius—*De moribus Romanorum*, concealed under the life of a saint.

But why should I go over old history? Every one remembers the excitement that the discovery caused—the leaders in the *Times* and the *Telegraph*, the doubts of the sceptical, the enthusiasm of the archæologists, the jealousy of the Berlin authorities, the offers from all the libraries of Europe, the aspersions of the British Museum. 'Why,' asked indignant critics, 'did Dr. Groschen offer his MS. to the authorities at Oxbridge?' 'Because Oxbridge had been the first to recognise his genius,' was the crushing reply. And Professor Girdelstone said that should the Fitz-Taylor fail to acquire the MS. by any false economy on the part of the University authorities, the prestige of the museum would be gone. But this is all old history. I only remind the reader of what he knows already.

I began to bring all my powers, and the force of the scientific world in Oxbridge, to bear in opposition to the purchase of the MS. I pulled every wire I knew, and execration was heaped on me as a vandal, though I only said the University money should be devoted to other channels than the purchase of doubtful MSS. I was doing all this, when I was startled by the intelligence that Dr. Groschen had suddenly come to the conclusion that his find was after all only a forgery.

The Book of Jasher was a Byzantine fake, and he ascribed the date at the very earliest to the reign of Alexis Comnenus. Theologians became fierce on the subject. They had seen the MS.; they knew it was genuine. And when Dr. Groschen began to have doubts on Aulus Gellius, suggesting it was a sixteenth-century fabrication, the classical world 'morally and physically rose and denounced' him. Dr. Groschen, who had something of the early Christian in his character, bore this shower of opprobrium like a martyr. 'I may be mistaken,' he said, 'but I believe I have been deceived. I have been taken in before, and I would not like the MS.

offered to any library before two of the very highest experts could decide as to its authenticity.' People had long learnt to regard Dr. Groschen himself as quite the highest expert in the world. They thought he was out of his senses, though the press commended him for his honesty, and one daily journal, loudest in declaring its authenticity, said it was glad Dr. Groschen had detected the forgery long recognised by their special correspondent. Dr. Groschen was furthermore asked to what experts he would submit his MS., and by whose decision he would abide. After some delay and correspondence, he could think of only two — Professor Girdelstone and Monteagle. They possessed great opportunities, he said, of judging on such matters. Their erudition was of a steadier and more solid nature than his own. Then the world and Oxbridge joined again in a chorus of praise. What could be more honest, more straightforward, than submitting the MS. to a final examination at the hands of the two curators of the FitzTaylor, who were to have the first refusal of the MS. if it was considered authentic? No

museum was ever given such an opportunity. Professor Girdelstone and his colleague soon came to a conclusion. They decided that there could be no doubt as to the authenticity of the Aulus Gellius. In portions it was true that between the lines other characters were partly legible ; but this threw no slur on the MS. itself. Of the commentary on the book of Jasher, it will be remembered, they gave no decisive opinion, and it is still an open question. They expressed their belief that the Aulus Gellius was alone worth the price asked by Dr. Groschen. It only remained now for the University to advance a sum to the Fitz-Taylor for the purchase of this treasure. The curators, rather prematurely perhaps, wrote privately to Dr. Groschen making him an offer for his MS., and paid him half the amount out of their own pockets, so as to close the bargain once and for all.

The delay of the University in making the grant caused a good deal of apprehension in the hearts of Professor Girdelstone and Monteagle. They feared that the enormous sums offered by the Berlin Museum would

tempt even the simple-minded Dr. Groschen, though the interests of the FitzTaylor were so near his heart. These suspicions proved unfounded as they were ungenerous. The *savant* was contented with his degree and college rooms, and showed no hurry for the remainder of the sum to be paid.

One night, when I was seated in my rooms beside the fire, preparing lectures on the ichthyosaurus, I was startled by a knock at my door. It was a hurried, jerky rap. I shouted, 'Come in.' The door burst open, and on the threshold I saw Monteagle, with a white face, on which the beads of perspiration glittered. At first I thought it was the rain which had drenched his cap and gown, but in a moment I saw that the perspiration was the result of terror or anxiety (*cf.* my lectures on Mental Equilibrium). Monteagle and I in our undergraduate days had been friends; but like many University friendships, ours proved evanescent; our paths had lain in different directions.

He had chosen archæology. We failed to convert one another to each other's views. When he became a member of 'The Dis-

ciples,' a mystic Oxbridge society, the fissure between us widened to a gulf. We nodded when we met, but that was all. With Girdelstone I was not on speaking terms. So when I found Monteagle on my threshold I confess I was startled.

'May I come in?' he asked.

'Certainly, certainly,' I said cordially. 'But what is the matter?'

'Good God! Newall,' he cried, 'that MS. after all is a —— forgery.'

This expression I thought unbecoming in a 'Disciple,' but I only smiled and said, 'Really, you think so?' Monteagle then made reference to our old friendship, our unfortunate dissensions. He asked for my help, and then really excited my pity. Some member of the High Church party in Oxbridge had apparently been to Greece to attend a Conference on the Union of the Greek and Anglican Churches. While there he met Sarpedon, Patriarch of Hermaphroditopolis, and in course of conversation told him of the renowned Dr. Groschen. Sarpedon became distant at mention of the Doctor's name. He denied all knowledge of the

famous letter of introduction, and said the only thing he knew of the Professor was, that he was usually supposed to have been the thief who had made off with a large chest of parchments from the monastery of St. Basil.

The Greek Patriarch refused to give any further information. The English clergyman reported the incident privately to Girdelstone.

Dr. Groschen's other letters were examined, and found to be fabrications. The Book of Jasher and Aulus Gellius were submitted to a like scrutiny. Girdelstone and Monteagle came reluctantly to the conclusion that they were also vulgar and palpable forgeries. At the end of his story Monteagle almost burst into tears. I endeavoured to cheer him, although I was shrieking with laughter at the whole story.

Of course it was dreadful for him. If he exposed Dr. Groschen, his own reputation as an expert would be gone, and the Doctor was already paid half the purchase money. Monteagle was so agitated that it was with difficulty I could get his story out of him, and to this day I have never quite learned the truth. Controlling my laughter, I sent a note round to Professor

Girdelstone, asking him to come to my rooms. In about ten minutes he appeared, looking as draggled and sheepish as poor Monteagle. In his bosom he carried the fateful MS., which I now saw for the first time. If it was a forgery (and I have never been convinced) it was certainly a masterpiece. From what Girdelstone said to me, then and since, I think that the Aulus Gellius portion was genuine enough, and the Book of Jasher possibly the invention of Groschen; however, it will never be discovered if one or neither was genuine. Monteagle thought the ink used was a compound of tea and charcoal, but both he and Girdelstone were too suspicious to believe even each other by this time.

I tried to console them, and promised all help in my power. They were rather startled and alarmed when I laid out my plan of campaign. In the first place, I was to withdraw all opposition to the purchase of the MS. Girdelstone and Monteagle, meanwhile, were to set about having the Aulus Gellius printed and facsimiled; for I thought it was a pity such a work should be lost to the world. The facsimile was only to be *announced;* and

publication by the University Press to be put in hand at once. The text of Aulus Gellius can still be obtained, and a translation of those portions which can be rendered into English forms a volume of Mr. Bohn's excellent classical library, which will satisfy the curious who are unacquainted with Latin. Professor Girdelstone was to write a preface in very guarded terms. This will be familiar to all classical scholars.

It was with great difficulty that I could persuade Girdelstone and Monteagle of the sincerity of my actions; but the poor fellows were ready to catch at any straw for hope from exposure, and they listened to every word I said. As the whole University knew I was not on speaking terms with Girdelstone, I told him to adopt a Nicodemus-like attitude, and to come to me in the night-time, when we could hold consultation. To the outer world, during these anxious evenings, when I would see no one, I was supposed to be preparing my great syllabus of lectures on the ichthyosaurus. I communicated to my fellow-curators my plans bit by bit only, for I thought it would be better for their nerves. I made Monteagle

send round a notice to the press:—'That the MS. about to become the property of the University Museum was being facsimiled prior to publication, and at the earliest possible date would be on view in the Galleries where Dr. Groschen's collections are now exhibited.' This was to quiet the complaints already being made by scholars and commentators about the difficulty of obtaining access to the MS. The importunities of several religious societies to examine the Book of Jasher became intolerable. The Dean of Rothbury, an old friend of Girdelstone's, came from the north on purpose to collate the new-found work. With permission he intended, he said, to write a small brochure for the S.P.C.K. on the Book of Jasher, though I believe that he also felt some curiosity in regard to Aulus Gellius. I may be wronging him. The subterfuges, lies, and devices to which we resorted were not very creditable to ourselves. Girdelstone gave him a dinner, and Monteagle and I persuaded the Senate to confer on him an honorary degree. We amused him with advance sheets of the commentary. He was quite a month at Oxbridge, but at last was

recalled on business to the north by some lucky domestic family bereavement. Our next difficulty was the news that Sarpedon, Patriarch of Hermaphroditopolis, was about to visit England to attend an Anglican Synod. I thought Girdelstone would go off his head. Monteagle's hair became grey in a few weeks. Sarpedon was sure to be invited to Oxbridge. He would meet Dr. Groschen and then expose him. Our fears, I soon found out, were shared by the *savant*, who left suddenly on one of those mysterious visits to the East. I saw that our action must be prompt; or Girdelstone and Monteagle would be lost. They were horrified when I told them I proposed placing the MS. on public view in the museum immediately. A large plate-glass case was made by my orders, in which Girdelstone and Monteagle, who obeyed me like lambs, deposited their precious burden. It was placed in the Groschen Hall of the Fitz-Taylor. The crush that afternoon was terrible. All the University came to peer at the new acquisition. I must tell you that Dr. Groschen's antiquities occupied a temporary and fire-proof erection built of wood and tin,

at the back of the museum, with which it was connected by a long stone gallery, adorned with plaster casts.

I mingled with the crowd, and heard the remarks; though I advised Girdelstone and Monteagle to keep out of the way, as it would only upset them. Various dons came up and chaffed me about the opposition I made to the MS. being purchased. A little man of dark, sallow complexion asked me if I was Professor Girdelstone. He wanted to obtain leave to examine the MS. I gave him my card, and asked him to call on me, when I would arrange a suitable day. He told me he was a Lutheran pastor from Pomerania.

I was the last to leave the museum that afternoon. I often remained in the library long after five, the usual closing hour. So I dismissed the attendants who locked up everything with the exception of a small door in the stone gallery always used on such occasions. I waited till six, and as I went out opened near this door a sash window, having removed the iron shutters. After dinner I went round to Monteagle's rooms. He and

Girdelstone were sitting in a despondent way on each side of the fire, sipping weak coffee and nibbling Albert biscuits. They were startled at my entrance.

'What *have* you decided?' asked Girdelstone, hoarsely.

'All is arranged. Monteagle and I set fire to the museum to-night,' I said, quietly.

Girdelstone buried his face in his hands and began to sob.

'Anything but that—anything but that!' he cried. And Monteagle turned a little pale. At first they protested, but I overcame their scruples by saying they might get out of the mess how they liked. I advised Girdelstone to go to bed and plead illness for the next few days, for he really wanted rest. At eleven o'clock that night, Monteagle and myself crossed the meadows at the back of our college, and by a circuitous route reached the grounds surrounding the museum, which were planted with rhododendrons and other shrubs. The pouring rain was, unfortunately, not favourable for our enterprise. I brought however a small box of combustibles from the University Laboratories, and a dark lantern.

When we climbed over the low wall not far from the stone gallery, I saw, to my horror, a light emerging from the Groschen Hall. Monteagle, who is fearfully superstitious, began chattering his teeth. When we reached the small door I saw it was open. A thief had evidently forestalled us. Monteagle suggested going back, and leaving the thief to make off with the MS.; but I would not hear of such a proposal.

The door opening to the Groschen Hall at the end of the gallery was open, and beyond, a man, whom I at once recognised as the little Lutheran, was busily engaged in picking the lock of the case where were deposited the Book of Jasher and Aulus Gellius. Telling Monteagle to guard the door, I approached very softly, keeping behind the plaster casts. I was within a yard of him before he heard my boots creak. Then he turned round, and I found myself face to face with Dr. Groschen. I have never seen such a look of terror on any one's face.

'You scoundrel!' I cried, collecting myself, 'drop those things at once!' and I made for him with my fist. He dodged me. I ran

after him; but he threaded his way like a rat through the statues and cases of antiquities, and bolted down the passage out of the door, where he upset Monteagle and the lantern, and disappeared in the darkness and rain. I then returned to the scene of his labours. Monteagle was too frightened, owing to the rather ghostly appearance of the museum by the light of a feeble oil-lamp. In a small cupboard there was some dry sacking I had deposited there for the purpose some days before. This I ignited, along with certain native curiosities of straw and skin, wicker-work, and other ethnographical treasures.

Some new unpacked cases left by the attendants the previous afternoon materially assisted the conflagration.

It was an impressive scene, to witness the flames playing round the pedestals of the torsos, statues, and cases. I only waited for a few moments to make sure that my work was complete. I shut the iron door between the gallery and the hall to avoid the possibility of the fire spreading to the rest of the building. Then I seized Monteagle by the arm and hurried him through the rhododendrons,

over the wall, into the meadows. I turned back once, and just caught a glimpse of red flame bursting through the windows. Having seen Monteagle half-way back to the college, I returned to see if any alarm was given. Already a small crowd was collecting. A fire-engine arrived, and a local pump was almost set going. I returned to college, where I found the porter standing in the gateway.

'The FitzTaylor is burning,' he said. 'I have been looking out for you, sir.'

* * * * *

There is nothing more to tell. To this day no one suspects that the fire was the work of an incendiary. The Professor has returned from the East, but lives in great retirement. His friends say he has never quite recovered the shock occasioned by the loss of his collection. The rest of the museum was uninjured.

The death of Sarpedon, Patriarch of Hermaphroditopolis, at Naples, was a sudden and melancholy catastrophe, which people think affected Dr. Groschen more than the fire. Strangely enough, he had just been dining

with the Doctor the evening before. They met at Naples purposely to bury the hatchet.

Sometimes I ask myself if I did right in setting fire to the museum. You see, it was for the sake of others, not myself, and Monteagle was an old friend.

THE HOOTAWA VANDYCK.

'MY own experience,' said an expert to a group of mostly middle-aged men, who spent their whole life in investigating spiritual phenomena, 'is a peculiar one.

'It was in the early autumn of 1900. I was at Rome, where I went to investigate the relative artistic affinity between Pietro Cavallini and Giotto (whose position, I think, will have to be adjusted). There were as yet only a few visitors at the Hôtel Russie, chiefly maiden ladies and casual tourists, besides a certain Scotch family and myself. Colonel Brodie, formerly of the 69th Highlanders, was a retired officer of that rather peppery type which always seems to belong to the stage rather than real life, though you meet so many examples on the Continent. He possessed an extraordinary topographical knowledge of modern Rome, the tramway system, and the hours at which churches and galleries were open. He would

waylay you in the entrance-hall and inquire severely if you had been to the Catacombs. In the case of an affirmative answer he would describe an unvisited tomb or ruin, far better worth seeing; in that of a negative, he would smile, tell you the shortest and cheapest route, and the amount which should be tendered to the Trappist Father. Later on in the evening, over coffee, if he was pleased with you, he would mention in a very impressive manner, "I am, as you probably know, Colonel Brodie, of Hootawa." His wife, beside whom I sat at table d'hôte, retained traces of former beauty. She was thin, and still tight-laced; was somewhat acid in manner; censorious concerning the other visitors; singularly devoted to her tedious husband, and fretfully attached to the beautiful daughter, for whose pleasure and education they were visiting Rome. I gathered that they were fairly well-to-do.

It was Mrs. Brodie who first broke the ice by asking if I was interested in pictures. Miss Brodie, who sat between her parents, turned very red, and said, "Oh, mamma, you are talking to one of the greatest experts in

Europe!" I was surprised and somewhat gratified by her knowledge (indeed, it chilled me some days later when she confessed to having learnt the information only that day by overhearing an argument between myself and a friend at the Colonna Gallery on Stefano de Zevio, and the indebtedness of Northern Italian art to Teutonic influences).

Mrs. Brodie took the intelligence quite calmly, and merely inspected me through her lorgnettes as if I were an object in a museum.

"Ah, you must talk to Flora about pictures. I have no doubt that she will tell you a good deal that even *you* do not know. We have some very interesting pictures up in Scotland. My husband is Colonel Brodie of Hootawa (no relation to the Brodie of Brodie). His grandfather was a great collector, and originally we possessed seven Raphaels."

"Indeed," I replied, eagerly, "might I ask the names of the pictures? I should know them at once."

"I have never seen them," said Mrs. Brodie; "they were not left to my husband, who quarrelled with his father. Fortunately

none of us cared for Raphaels; but the most valuable pictures, including a Vandyck, were entailed. Flora is particularly attached to Vandyck. He is always so romantic, I think."

Flora, embarrassed by her mother's eulogy of family heirlooms, leaned across, as if to address me, and said, "Oh, mamma, I don't think they really were Raphaels; they were probably only by pupils—Giulio Romano, Perino del Vaga, or Luca Penni."

"As you never saw them, my dear," said Mrs. Brodie, severely, "I don't think you can possibly tell. Your grandfather" (she glared at me) "was considered *the* greatest expert in Europe, and described them in his will as Raphaels. It would be impious to suggest that they are by any one else. There were *two* Holy Families. One of them was given to your grandfather by the King of Holland in recognition of his services; and a third was purchased direct from the Queen of Naples. But your father is getting impatient for his cigar."

They rose, and bowed sweetly. I joined them in the glass winter-garden a few minutes later.

"Have you been to the Pincio? But I forgot, of course you know Rome. I do love the Pincio," sighed Mrs. Brodie over some needlework, and then, as an afterthought, "Do you know the two things that have impressed me most since I came here?"

"I could not dare to guess any more than I dare tell you what has impressed me most," I replied, gazing softly at Flora.

"The two things which have really and truly impressed me most," continued Mrs. Brodie, "more than anything else, more than the Pantheon, or the Forum, are—St. Peter's and the Colosseum." She almost looked young again.

The next day we visited the Borghese; and I was able to explain to Flora why the circular "Madonna and Angels" was not by Botticelli. And, indeed, there was hardly a picture in Rome I was unable to reattribute to its rightful owner. In the apt Flora I found a receptive pupil. She even grew suspicious about the great Velasquez at the Doria, in which she fancied, with all the enthusiasm of youth, that she detected the

handling of Mazo. I soon found that it was better for her training to discourage her from looking at pictures at all—we confined ourselves to photographs. In a photograph you are not disturbed by colour, or by impasto. You are able to study the morphic values in a picture, by which means you arrive at the attribution without any disturbing æsthetic considerations.

One afternoon, returning from some church ceremony, Flora said to me, "Oh, Aleister" (we were already engaged secretly), "papa is going to ask you next winter to stay at Hootawa. Before I forget, I want to warn you never to criticise the pictures. They are mostly of the Dutch and English School, and I dare say you will find a great many of the names wrong; but, you know, papa is irritable, and it would offend him if you said that the 'Terborch' was really by Pieter de Hooghe. You can easily avoid saying anything—and then, you will really admire the Vandyck."

"Darling Flora, of course I promise. By the way, you never speak of your family ghost, although Mrs. Brodie always refers to it as if I knew all about it; and the Colonel has

often told me of Sir Rupert's military achievements."

"Oh, Aleister, I don't know whether you believe in ghosts: it *is* very extraordinary. Whenever any disaster, or any good fortune happens to our family, Sir Rupert Brodie's figure, just as he appears in the Vandyck, is seen walking in the Long Gallery; and every night he appears at twelve o'clock in the green spare bedroom; but only guests and servants ever see him there. We have a saying at Hootawa, that servants will not stay unless they are able to see Sir Rupert the first month after their arrival. Only members of the family are able to see him in the Long Gallery, and, of course, we never know whether he betokens good or ill luck. The last time he appeared there, papa was so nervous that he sold out of Consols, which went down an eighth the day after. We were all very much relieved. But he invested the money in some concern called "The Imperial Federation Stylograph Pen Company," and lost most of it; so it was not of much use."

"Tell me, darling, of your father's other investments," I asked anxiously.

"Oh, you must ask papa about them, I don't understand business; but I want to tell you about Sir Rupert. The Society for Psychical Research sent down a Committee to inquire into the credibility of the ghost, and recorded four authentic apparitions in the spare bedroom; and on family evidence accepted at least three events in the Long Gallery. It was just after their report was issued that papa was invited to lease the house to some Americans for the summer. He always gets a good price for it now, simply on account of the ghost. I always think that rather horrid. I don't believe poor Sir Rupert would like it."

"Perhaps he doesn't know," I suggested.

"Of course, you don't believe in him," she said in rather an offended way.

"My darling, of course I do; I have always believed in ghosts. Most of the pictures in the world, as I am always saying, were painted by *ghosts.*"

"Oh, no, Aleister, you're laughing at me; but when you see Sir Rupert, as you will, in the spare bedroom, you will believe too."

At the end of January, I became Flora's accepted fiancé.

In February, I moved with the Brodies to Florence, where I was able to introduce them to all my kind and hospitable friends —the Berensons, Mr. Charles Loeser, Mr. Herbert Horne, and Mr. Hobart Cust. Flora was in every way a great success, and commenced a little book on Nera di Bicci for Bell's Great Painters Series. She was invited to contribute to the *Burlington Magazine*. It was quite a primavera. Our marriage was arranged for the following February. The Brodies were to return to Hootawa after it was vacated by the American summer tenants. I was to join them for Christmas on my return from America, where I was compelled to go in order to settle my affairs. My father, Lorenzo Q. Sweat, of Chicago, evinced great pleasure at my approaching union with an old Scotch family; he promised me a handsome allowance considering his recent losses in the meat packing swindle—I mean trade. I was able to dissuade him from coming to Europe for the ceremony. After delivering two successful lectures on Pietro Cavallini in the early fall at mothers' soirées, I sailed for Liverpool.

There was deep snow on the ground when I arrived at Hootawa in the early afternoon of a cold December day. The Colonel met me at the station in the uniform of the 69th, attended by two gillies holding torches.

"There will just be enough light to glance at the pictures before tea," he said gaily, and in three-quarters of an hour I was embracing Flora and saluting her mother, who were in the hall to greet me. For the most part Hootawa was a typical old Scotch castle, with extinguisher turrets; an incongruous Jacobean addition rather enhancing its picturesque ensemble.

"You'll see better pictures here than anything in Rome," remarked the Colonel; but Flora giggled rather nervously.

In the smoking-room and library, I inspected, with assumed interest, works by the little masters of Holland, and some more admirable examples of the English Eighteenth Century School. Faithful to my promise, I pronounced every one of them to be little gems, unsurpassed by anything in the private collections of America or Europe. We passed into the drawing-room and parlour with the same success. In the latter apartment the

Colonel, grasping my arm, said impressively: "Now you will see our great treasure, the Brodie Vandyck, of which Flora has so often told you. I have never lent it for exhibition, for, as you know, we are rather superstitious about it. Sir Joshua Reynolds, in 1780, offered to paint the portraits of the whole family in exchange for the picture. Dr. Waagen describes it in his well-known work. Dr. Bode came from Berlin on purpose to see it some years ago, when he left a certificate (which was scarcely necessary) of its undoubted authenticity. I was so touched by his genuine admiration, that I presented him with a small Dutch picture which he admired in the smoking-room, and thought not unworthy of placing in the Berlin Gallery. I expect you know Dr. Bode."

"Not personally," I said, as we stepped into the Long Gallery.

It was a delightful panelled room, with oak-beamed ceiling. Between the mullioned windows were old Venetian mirrors and seventeenth-century chairs. At the end, concealed by a rich crimson brocade, hung the Vandyck, the only picture on the walls.

It was the Colonel himself who drew aside the curtain which veiled discreetly the famous picture of Sir Rupert Brodie at the age of thirty-two, in the beautiful costume of the period. The face was unusually pallid ; it was just the sort of portrait you would expect to walk out of its frame.

"You have never seen a finer Vandyck, I am sure," said Mrs. Brodie, anxiously. I examined the work with great care, employing a powerful pocket-glass. There was an awkward pause for about five minutes.

"Well, sir," said the Colonel, sternly, "have you nothing to say?"

"It is a very interesting and excellent work, though *not* by Vandyck; it is by Jamieson, his Scotch pupil; the morphic forms . . . ."— but I got no further. There was a loud clap of thunder, and Flora fainted away. I was hastening to her side when her father's powerful arm seized my collar. He ran me down the gallery and out by an egress which led into the entrance hall, where some menial opened the massive door. I felt one stinging blow on my face; then, bleeding and helpless, I was kicked down the steps into the snow

from which I was picked up, half stunned, by one of the gillies.

"Eh, mon, hae ye seen the bogles at Hootawa?" he observed.

"It will be very civil of you if you will conduct me to the depôt, or the nearest caravanserai," I replied.

I never saw Flora again.'

* * * * *

'But what has happened about the ghost, Mr. Sweat? You never told us anything about it. Did you ever see it?' asked one of the listeners in a disappointed tone.

'Oh, I forgot; no, that was rather tragic. *Sir Rupert Brodie never appeared again*, not even in the spare bedroom; he seemed offended. Eventually his portrait was sent up to London, where Mr. Lionel Cust pointed out that it could not have been painted until after Vandyck's death, at which time Sir Rupert was only ten years old. Indeed, there was some uncertainty whether the picture represented Sir Rupert at all. Mr. Bowyer Nichols found fault with the costume, which belonged to an earlier date prior to Sir Rupert's

birth. Colonel Brodie never recovered from the shock. He resides chiefly at Harrogate. Gradually the servants all gave notice, and Hootawa ceased to attract Americans. Poor Flora! I ought to have remembered my promise; but the habit was too strong in me. Sir Oliver Lodge, I believe, has an explanation for the non-appearance of the phantom after the events I have described. He regards it as a good instance of *bypsychic duality*—the fortuitous phenomenon by which spirits are often uncertain as to whom they really represent. But I am only an art critic, not a physicist.'

To Herbert Horne, Esq.

THE ELEVENTH MUSE.

IN the closing years of the last century I held the position of a publisher's hack. Having failed in everything except sculpture, I became publisher's reader and adviser. It was the age of the 'dicky dongs,' and, of course, I advised chiefly the publication of deciduous literature, or books which dealt with the history of decay. The business, unfortunately, closed before my plans were materialised; but there was a really brilliant series of works prepared for an ungrateful public. A cheap and abridged edition of Gibbon was to have heralded the 'Ruined Home' Library, as we only dealt with the decline and fall of things, and eschewed Motley in both senses of the word. 'Bad Taste in All Ages' (twelve volumes edited by myself) would have rivalled some of Mr. Sidney Lee's monumental undertakings. It was a memory of these unfulfilled designs which has turned my thoughts to an old note-book — the skeleton of what was destined never to be a book in being.

I have often wondered why no one has ever

tried to form an anthology of bad poetry. It would, of course, be easy enough to get together a dreary little volume of unreadable and unsaleable song. There are, however, certain stanzas so exquisite in their unconscious absurdity that an inverted immortality may be claimed for them. It is essential that their authors should have been serious, because parody and light verse have been carried to such a state of perfection that a tenth muse has been created—the muse of Mr. Owen Seaman and the late St. John Hankin for example. When the Anakim, men of old, which were men of renown—Shelley, Keats, or Tennyson—become playful, I confess to a feeling of nervousness: the unpleasant, hot sensation you experience when a distinguished man makes a fool of himself. Rossetti—I suppose from his Italian origin—was able to assume motley without loss of dignity, and that wounded Titan, the late W. E. Henley, was another exception. Both he and Rossetti had the faculty of being foolish, or obscene, without impairing the high seriousness of their superb poetic gifts.

But I refer to more serious folly—that of

the disciples of Silas Wegg. Some friends of mine in the country employed a ladies'-maid with literary proclivities. She was never known to smile; the other servants thought her stuck up; she was a great reader of novels, poetry, and popular books on astronomy. One day she gave notice, departed at the end of a month, left no address, and never applied for a character. Beneath the mattress of her bed was found a manuscript of poems. One of these, addressed to our satellite, is based on the scientific fact (of which I was not aware until I read her poem) that we see only one side of the moon. The ode contains this ingenious stanza:—

> O beautiful moon!
> When I gaze on thy face
> Careering among the boundāries of space,
> The thought has often come to my mind
> If I ever shall see thy glorious behind.

It was my pleasure to communicate this verse to our greatest living conversationalist, a point I mention because it may, in consequence, be already known to those who, like myself, enjoy the privileges of his inimitable talk. I possess the original manuscript of the

poem, and can supply copies of the remainder to the curious.

In a magazine managed by the physician of a well-known lunatic asylum I found many inspiring examples. The patients are permitted to contribute: they discuss art and literature, subject of course to a stringent editorial discretion. As you might suppose, poetry occupies a good deal of space. It was from that source of clouded English I culled the following:—

> His hair is red and blue and white,
> His face is almost tan,
> His brow is wet with blood and sweat,
> He steals from where he can:
> And looks the whole world in the face,
> A drunkard and a man.

I think we have here a Henley manqué. In robustious assertion you will not find anything to equal it in the Hospital Rhymes of that author. I was so much struck by the poem that I obtained permission to correspond with the poet. I discovered that another Sappho might have adorned our literature; that a mute inglorious Elizabeth Barrett was kept silent in Darien—for the asylum was in

the immediate vicinity of the Peak in Derbyshire. Of the correspondence which ensued I venture to quote only one sentence:

'I was brought up to love beauty; my home was more than cultured; it was refined; we took in the *Art Journal* regularly.'

Of all modern artists, I suppose that Sir Edward Burne-Jones has inspired more poetry than any other. A whole school of Oxford poets emerged from his fascinating palette, and he is the subject of perhaps the most exquisite of all the *Poems and Ballads* —the '*Dedication*'—which forms the colophon to that revel of rhymes. I sometimes think that is why his art is out of fashion with modern painters, who may inspire dealers, but would never inspire poets. For who could write a sonnet on some uncompromising pieces of realism by Mr. Rothenstein, Mr. John, or Mr. Orpen? Theirs is an art which speaks for itself. But Sir Edward Burne-Jones seems to have dazzled the undergrowth of Parnassus no less than the higher slopes. In a long and serious epic called 'The Pageant of Life,' dealing with every conceivable subject, I found:—

With some the mention of Burne-Jones
Elicits merely howls and groans;
But those who know each inch of art
Believe that he can bear his part.

I don't remember what he could bear. Perhaps it referred to his election at the Royal Academy. Then, again, in a 'Vision' of the next world, a poet described how—

Byron, Burne-Jones, and Beethoven,
Charlotte Brontë and Chopin are there.

I wonder if this has escaped the eagle eye of Mr. Clement Shorter. Though perhaps the most delightful nonsense, for which, I fear, this great painter is partly responsible, may be found in a recent poem addressed to the memory of my old friend, Simeon Solomon:—

More of Rossetti? Yes:
You follow'd than Burne-Jones,
Your depth of colour his
than that of monochromes!
Yes; amber lilies poured, I say,
A joy for thee, than poet's bay.

But while true art refines
and often stimulates,
Art does, at times, I say,
sit grief within our gates!
Art causes men to weep at times—
If you may heed these falt'ring rhymes.

THE ELEVENTH MUSE

A small volume of lyrics once sent to me for review afforded another flower for my garland :—

> Where in the spring-time leaves are wet,
> Oh, lay my love beneath the shades,
> Where men remember to forget,
> And are forgot in Hades.

But I have given enough examples for what would form Part I. of the English anthology. Part II. would consist of really bad verses from really great poetry.

> Auspicious Reverence, hush all meaner song,

is one of the most pompously stupid lines in English poetry. Arnold did not hesitate to quote instances from Shakespeare :—

> Till that Bellona's bridegroom, lapp'd in proof,
> Confronted him with self-comparisons.

You would have to sacrifice Browning, because it might fairly be concluded—well, anything might be concluded about Browning. Byron is, of course, a mine. Arthur Hugh Clough is, perhaps, the 'flawless numskull," as, I think, Swinburne calls him. Tennyson surpassed

> A Mr. Wilkinson, a clergyman,

in many of his serious poems.

> To travellers indeed the sea
> Must always interesting be

I have heard ascribed to Wordsworth, but wrongly, I believe. I should, of course, exclude from the collection living writers; only the select dead would be requisitioned. They cannot retort. And the entertaining volume would illustrate that curious artistic law—the survival of the unfittest, of which we are only dimly beginning to realise the significance. It is like the immortality of the invalid, now recognised by all men of science. You see it manifested in the plethora of memoirs. All new books not novels are about great dead men by unimportant little living ones. When I am asked, as I have been, to write recollections of certain 'people of importance,' as Dante says, I feel the force of that law very keenly.

To Frederick Stanley Smith, Esq.

SWINBLAKE: A PROPHETIC BOOK, WITH HOME ZARATHRUSTS.

EVERY student of Blake has read, or must read, Mr. Swinburne's extraordinary essay, *William Blake: a critical study*, of which a new edition was recently published. It would be idle at this time of day to criticise. Much has been discovered, and more is likely to be discovered, about Blake since 1866. The interest of the book, for us, is chiefly reflex. *And does not the great mouth laugh at a gift*, if scheduled in an examination paper with the irritating question, 'From what author does this quotation come?' would probably elicit the reply, 'Swinburne.' Yet it occurs in one of Blake's prophetic books.

How fascinated Blake would have been with Mr. Swinburne if by some exquisite accident he had lived *after* him. We should

have had, I fancy, another Prophetic Book; something of this kind:

Swinburne roars and shakes the world's literature—
The English Press, and a good many contemporaries—
Tennyson palls, Browning is found—
Only a brownie—
The mountains divide, the Press is unanimous—
Aylwin is born—
On a perilous path, on the cliff of immortality—
I met Theodormon—
He seemed sad: I said, 'Why are you sad—
Are you writing the long-promised life—
Of Dante Gabriel Rossetti?'—
He sighed and said, 'No, not that—
Not that, my child—
I consigned the task to William Michael—
Pre-Raphaelite memoirs are cheap to-day—
You can have them for a sextet or an octave.'—
I brightened and said, 'Then you are writing a sonnet?'
He shook his head and said it was symbolical—
For six and eightpence!—
A golden rule: Never lend only George Borrow—

A new century had begun, and I asked Theodormon what he was doing on that path and where Mr. Swinburne was. Beneath us yawned the gulf of oblivion.

'Be careful, young man, not to tumble over; are you a poet or a biographer?'

I explained that I was merely a tourist. He gave a sigh of relief: 'I have an appointment here with my only disciple, Mr. Howlglass; if you are not careful he may write an appreciation of you.'

'My dear Theodormon, if you will show me how to reach Mr. Swinburne I will help you.'

'I swear by the most sacred of all oaths, by Aylwin, you shall see Swinburne.'

Just then we saw a young man coming along the path with a Kodak and a pink evening paper. He seemed pleased to see me, and said, 'May I appreciate you?'

I gave the young man a push and he fell right over the cliff. Theodormon threw down after him a heavy-looking book which, alighting on his skull, smashed it. 'My preserver,' he cried, 'you shall see what you like, you shall do what you like, except write my biography. Swinburne is close at hand, though he occasionally wanders. His permanent address is the Peaks, Parnassus. Perhaps you would like to pay some other calls as well.'

I assented.

We came to a printing-house and found William Morris reverting to type and transmitting art to the middle classes.

'The great Tragedy of Topsy's life,' said Theodormon, 'is that he converted the middle classes to art and socialism, but he never touched the unbending Tories of the proletariat or the smart set. You would have thought, on homœopathic principles, that cretonne would appeal to cretins.'

'Vale, vale,' cried Charles Ricketts from the interior.

I was rather vexed, as I wanted to ask Ricketts his opinions about various things and people and to see his wonderful collection. Shannon, however, presented me with a lithograph and a copy of 'Memorable Fancies,' by C. R.

How sweet I roamed from school to school,
  But I attached myself to none;
I sat upon my ancient Dial
  And watched the other artists' fun.

Will Rothenstein can guard the faith,
  Safe for the Academic fold;
'Twas very wise of William Strang,
  What need have I of Chantrey's gold?

Let the old masters be my share,
And let them fall on B. B.'s corn;
Let the Uffizi take to Steer—
What do I care for Herbert Horne

Or the stately Holmes of England,
Whose glories never fade;
The Constable of Burlington,
Who holds the Oxford Slade.

It's Titian here and Titian there,
And come to have a look;
But 'thanks of course Giorgione,'
With Mr. Herbert Cook.

For MacColl is an intellectual thing,
And Hugh P. Lane keeps Dublin awake,
And Fry to New York has taken wing,
And Charles Holroyd has got the cake.

After turning round a rather sharp corner I began to ask Theodormon if John Addington Symonds was anywhere to be found. He smiled, and said: 'I know why you are asking. Of course he *is* here, but we don't see much of him. He published, at the Kelmscott, the other day, "An Ode to a Grecian Urning." The proceeds of the sale went to the Arts and Krafts Ebbing Guild, but the issue of "Aretino's Bosom, and other Poems," has been postponed.'

We now reached a graceful Renaissance building covered with blossoms; on each side of the door were two blue-breeched gondoliers smoking calamus. Theodormon hurried on, whispering: '*That* is where he lives. If you want to see Swinburne you had better make haste, as it is getting late, and I want you to inspect the Castalian spring.'

The walking became very rough just here; it was really climbing. Suddenly I became aware of dense smoke emerging with a rumbling sound from an overhanging rock.

'I had no idea Parnassus was volcanic now,' I remarked.

'No more had we,' said Theodormon; 'it is quite a recent eruption due to the Celtic movement. The rock you see, however, is not a real rock, but a sham rock. Mr. George Moore has been turned out of the cave, and is still hovering about the entrance.'

Looming through the smoke, which hung like a veil of white muslin between us, I was able to trace the silhouette of that engaging countenance which Edouard Manet and others have immortalised. 'Go away,' he said: 'I do not want to speak to you.'

'Come, come, Mr. Moore,' I rejoined, 'will you not grant a few words to a really warm admirer?'—but he had faded away. Then a large hand came out of the cavern and handed me a piece of paper, and a deep voice with a slight brogue said: 'If you see mi darlin' Gosse give this to him.' The paper contained these verses:—

> Georgey Morgie, kidden and sly,
> Kissed the girls and made them cry;
> *What* the girls came out to say
> George never heard, for he ran away.
>
> W. B. Y

We skirted the edge of a thick wood. A finger-post pointed to the Castalian spring, and a notice-board indicated *Trespassers will be prosecuted. The lease to be disposed of. Apply to G. K. Chesterton.*

Soon we came to an open space in which was situated a large, rather dilapidated marble tank. I noticed that the water did not reach further than the bathers' stomachs. Theodormon anticipated my surprise. 'Yes, we have had to depress the level of the water during the last few years out of compliment to some

of the bathers, and there have been a good many bathing fatalities of a very depressing description.'

'You don't mean to say,' I replied, 'Richard le Gallienne?'

'Hush! hush! he was rescued.'

'Stephen Phillips?' I asked, anxiously.

'Well, he couldn't swim, of course, but he floated; you see he had the Sidney Colvin lifebelt on, and that is always a great assistance.'

'Not,' I almost shrieked, 'my favourite poet, the author of "Lord 'a Muzzy don't you fret. Missed we De Wet. Missed we De Wet"?'

Theodormon became very grave. 'We do not know any of their names,' he said. 'I will show you, presently, the Morgue. Perhaps you will be able to identify some of your friends. The Coroner has refused to open an inquest until Mr. John Lane can attend to give his evidence.'

I saw the Poet Laureate trying very hard to swim on his back. Another poet was sitting down on the marble floor so that the water might at least come up to his neck. Gazing

disconsolately into the pellucid shallows I saw the revered and much-loved figures of Mr. Andrew Lang, Mr. Austin Dobson, and Mr. Edmund Gosse. 'Going for a dip?' said Theodormon. 'Thanks, we don't care about paddling,' Mr. Lang retorted.

'I hope it is not *always* so shallow,' I said to my guide.

'Oh, no; we have a new water-supply, but as the spring is in the nature of a public place, we won't turn on the fresh water until people have learnt to appreciate what is good. That handsome little marble structure which you see at the end of the garden is really the *new* Castalian Spring. At all events, that is where all the miracles take place. The old bath is terribly out of repair, in spite of plumbing.'

We then inspected a very neat little apartment mosaiced in gold. Round the walls were attractive drinking-fountains, and on each was written the name of the new water—I mean the new poet. Some of them I recognised: Laurence Binyon, A. E. Housman, Sturge Moore, Santayana, Arthur Symons, Herbert Trench, Henry Simpson, Laurence

Housman, F. W. Tancred, Arthur Lyon Raile, William Watson, Hugh Austin.

'You see we have the very latest,' said Theodormon, 'provided it is always the best. I am sorry to say that some of the taps don't give a constant supply, but that is because the machinery wants oiling. Try some Binyon,' said my guide, filling a gold cup on which was wrought by some cunning craftsman the death of Adam and the martyrdom of the Blessed Christina. I found it excellent and refreshing, and observed that it was cheering to come across the excellence of sincerity and strength at a comparatively new source . . . .

Mr. Swinburne was seated in an arbour of roses, clothed in a gold dalmatic, a birthday gift from his British Peers. Their names were embroidered in pearls on the border. I asked permission to read my address:—

There beats no heart by Cam or Isis
(Where tides of poets ebb and flow),
But guards Dolores as a crisis
Of long ago.

A crisis bringing fire and wonder,
A gift of some dim Eastern Mage,
A firework still smouldering under
The feet of middle age.

For you could love and hate and tell us
Of almost everything,
You made our older poets jealous,
For you alone could sing.

In truth it was your splendid praises
Which made us wake
To glories hidden in the phrases
Of William Blake.

No boy who sows his metric salads
His tamer oats,
But always steals from Swinburne's ballads
The stronger notes.

'Do you play golf?' said Mr. Swinburne, handing me two little spheres such as are used in the royal game. And I heard no more; for I received a blow—whether delivered by Mr. Swinburne or the ungrateful Theodormon I do not know, but I found myself falling down the gulf of oblivion, and suddenly, with a dull thud, I landed on the remains of Howlglass. The softness of his head had really preserved me from what might have

been a severe shock, because the distance from Parnassus to Fleet Street, as you know, is considerable, and the escalade might have been more serious. I reached my rooms in Half Moon Street, however, having seen only one star, with just a faint nostalgia for the realms into which for one brief day I was privileged to peep.

(1906.)

A MISLAID POET.

IN the closing years of my favourite last century, when poetry was more discussed than it is now (at all events as a marketable commodity), few verse-writers were overlooked. Bosola's observation about 'the neglected poets of your time' could not be quoted with any propriety. Mr. John Lane would make long and laborious journeys on the District Railway, armed *bag-à-pied*, in order to discover the new and unpublished. Now he has shot over all the remaining preserves; laurels and bays, so necessary for the breed 'of men and women overwrought,' have withered in the London soot. There was one bright creature, however, who escaped his rifle; she was brought down by another sportsman, and thus missed some of the fame which might have attached to her had she been trussed and hung in the Bodley Head. Poaching in the library at Thelema, I came across her by accident. Her song is not without significance.

In 1878 Georgiana Farrer mentioned on

page 190 of her *Miscellaneous Poems*, 'I am old by sin entangled;' but this was probably a pious exaggeration. Only some one young and intellectually very vigorous could have penned her startling numbers. I suggest that she retained more of her youth than, from religious motives, she thought it proper to admit. In the 'eighties, when incense was burned in drawing-rooms, and people were talking about 'The Blessed Damozel,' she could write of Paradise:—

A home where Jesus Christ is King,
A home where e'en Archangels sing,
Where common wealth is shared by all,
And God Himself lights up the Hall.

She was philosemite, and from the reference to Lord Beaconsfield we can easily date the following:—

You who doubt the truth of Scripture,
Pray tell me, then, who are the Jews?
Scattered in all lands and nations,
Pray why their evidence refuse?

It seems to me you must be blind;
Are they not daily gaining ground?
We find them now in every land,
And well-nigh ruling all around.

Their music is most sweet to hear;
Jews were Rossini and Mozart,
Mendelssohn, too, and Meyerbeer;
Grisi in song could charm the heart.

The funds their princes hold in hand;
Their merchants trade both near and far;
Ill-used and robbed they long have been,
Yet wealthy now they surely are.

In Germany who has great sway?
Prince Bismarck, most will answer me;
Our own Prime Minister retains
A name that shows his pedigree.

Who after this will dare to say
They nought in these strange people see;
Do they not prove the Scripture true,
And throw a light on history?

The twenty-five years that have elapsed since the poem was written must have convinced those innocent persons who 'saw nought' in our Israelitish compatriots. I never heard before that Prince Bismarck or Mozart was of Jewish extraction!

Mrs. Farrer was, of course, an evangelical, somewhat old-fashioned for so late a date; and fairly early in her volume she warns us of what we may expect. She is anxious to

damp any undue optimism as to the lightness of her muse. When worldly, foolish people like Whistler and Pater were talking 'art for art's sake,' she could strike a decisive didactic blow:—

> My voice like thunder may appear,
> Yet oft-times I have shed a tear
> Behind the peal, like rain in storm,
> To moisten those I would reform.
>
> Then pardon if my stormy mood,
> Instead of blighting, does some good.
> Sooner a thunder-clap, think me,
> Than sunstroke sent in wrath on thee.

With a splendid Calvinism, too rare at that time, she would not argue beyond a *certain* limit; there was an edge, she realised, to every platform; an ounce of assertion is worth pounds of proof. Religious discussion after a time becomes barren:—

> Then hundredfolds to sinners
> Must be repaid in Hell.
> If you think such men winners,
> We disagree. Farewell.

But to the person who *is* right (and Mrs. Farrer was never in a moment's doubt, though her prosody is influenced sometimes by the

sceptical Matthew Arnold) there is no mean reward:—

I sparkle resplendent,
A star in His crown,
And glitter for ever,
A gem of renown.

From internal evidence we can gauge her social position, while her views of caste appear in these radical days a trifle *demodé*. Her metaphors of sin are all derived from the life of paupers:—

Paupers through their sinful folly
Are workers of iniquity,
Living on Jehovah's bounty,
Wasting in abject poverty.

A pauper's funeral their end,
No angels waft their souls on high;
Rich they were thought on earth, perhaps,
Yet far from wealth accursed they lie.

Who are the rich? God's Word declares,
The men whose treasure is above—
Those humble working *gentlefolk*
Whose life flows on in deeds of love.

Despised in life I may remain,
Misunderstood by rich and poor;
An entrance yet I hope to gain
To wealthy plains on endless shore.

No paupers in that heavenly land,
The sons of God are rich indeed;
His daughters all His treasures share;
It will their highest hopes exceed.

Those paupers who are 'saved' are rewarded by material comforts such as graced the earthly home of Georgiana herself, one of the 'humble working *gentlefolk*.' She enjoys her own fireside with an almost Pecksniffian relish, and she profoundly observes, as she sits beside her hearth:—

Like forest trees men rise and grow:
Good timber some will prove,
Others decayed as fuel piled,
Prepared are for that stove

That burns for ever, Tophet called,
Heated by jealous heat,
Adapted to destroy all chaff,
And leaves unscorched the wheat.

Excellent Georgiana! She could not stand very much chaff of any kind, I suspect.

The alarming progress of ritualism in the 'eighties disturbed her considerably, though it inspired some of her more weighty verses.

They should be favourites with Dr. Clifford and Canon Hensley Henson :—

Some men in our days cover over
A body deformed with their sin :
A cross worked in various colours,
Forgetting that God looks within.

Alas ! in our churches at present
Simplicity seems quite despised ;
To represent things far above us
Are heathenish customs revived.

This evil is spreading among us,
And where will it end, can you tell ?
Join not with the misled around us,
Take warning, my readers . . . .

The veneration of the Blessed Virgin goaded her into composition of stanzas unparalleled in the whole literature of Protestantism :—

My readers, can you nowhere see
A parallel to Israel's sin ?
The House of God, at home, abroad :
Idols are there—that house within.

Who incense burns ? are strange cakes made ?
What woman's chapel, decked with gold,
Stands full of unchecked worshippers
Like those idolaters of old ?

The Blessed Virgin—blest she is
That does not make her Heaven's Queen!
Yet some are taught to worship her;
What else does all this teaching mean?

What she denied to the Mother of God she accorded (rather daringly, I opine) to one Harriet, whose death and future are recorded in the following lines:—

Declining like the setting sun
After a course divinely run,
I saw a maiden passing fair
Reposing on an easy chair.

A Bridegroom of celestial mien
Came forth and claimed her for His Queen;
One with His Father on His throne
She lives entirely His own.

Harrietolatry, I thought, was confined to the members of the defunct Shelley Society. But every reader will feel the poignant truth of Mrs. Farrer's view of the Church of England —truer to-day than it could have been in the 'eighties:—

The Church of England—grand old ship—
Toss'd is on a troubled sea!
Her sails are rent, her decks are foul'd,
Mutiny on board must be.

The winds of discord howl around,
Wild disputers throw up foam,
From high to low she's beat about;
Frighten'd some who love her roam.

I do not know if the last word is intended for a pun, but I scarcely think it is likely.

I would like to reconstruct Mrs. Farrer's home, with its stiff Victorian chairs, its threaded antimacassars, its pictorial paper-weights, its wax flowers under glass shades, and the charming household porcelain from the Derby and Worcester furnaces. There must have been a sabbatic air of comfort about the dining-room which was soothing. I can see the engravings after Landseer: 'The Stag at Bay,' 'Dignity and Impudence'; or those after Martin: 'The Plains of Heaven,' and 'The Great Day of His Wrath'; and 'Blucher meeting Wellington,' after Maclise. I can see on each side of the mirror examples of the art of Daguerre, which have already begun to produce in us the same sentiment that we get from the early Tuscans; and on the mantelpiece a photograph of Harriet in a plush frame, the one touch of modernity in a room which was otherwise severely 1845. Then, on a bookshelf which

hung above the old tea-caddy and cut-glass sugar-bowl, Georgiana's library—'Line upon Line,' 'Precept upon Precept,' 'Jane the Cottager,' 'Pinnock's Scripture History,' and a few costly works bound in the style of the Albert Memorial. The drawing-room, just a trifle damp, must have contained Mr. Hunt's 'Light of the World,' which Mrs. Farrer never quite learned to love, though it was a present from a missionary, and rendered fire and artificial light unnecessary during the winter months. Would that Mrs. Farrer's home-life had come under the magic lens of Mr. Edmund Gosse, for it would now be classic, like the household of Sir Thomas More.

Whatever its attractions, Mrs. Farrer was at times induced to go abroad, visiting, I imagine, only the Protestant cantons of Switzerland. She stayed, however, in Paris, which she apostrophises with Sibyllic candour:—

> O city of pleasure, what did I see
> When passing through or staying in thee.
> Bright shone the sun above, blue was the sky,
> Everywhere music heard, none seemed to sigh.
> Beautiful carriages in Champs Elysée
> Filled with fair maidens on cushions easy.

Such was the outer side; what was within?
Most I was often told revelled in sin.
Sad its fate since I left, sadder 'twill be
If they go on in sin as seen by me.
Let us hope, ere too late, warned by the past,
They may seek pleasures more likely to last,
Or, like to Babylon, it must decline,
And o'er its ruins its lovers repine.

But London hardly fares much better, in spite of Mrs. Farrer's own residence, at Campden Hill, if I may hazard the locality:—

To the tomb they must go,
Rich and poor all in woe,
Strange motley throng.
Wealth in its splendour weeps,
Poverty silence keeps;
None last here long. . . .
So much for thee, London.

Except in a spiritual sense, her existence was not an eventful one. It was, I think, the loss of some neighbour's child which suggested:—

Nellarina, forced exotic,
Born to bloom in region fair,
Thou wert to me a narcotic,
Hope I did thy lot to share.

Any near personal sorrow she does not seem to have experienced, I am glad to say, else she might have regarded it as a grievance the consequences of which one dares not contemplate; you feel that *Some One* would have heard of it in no measured terms. Certainty and content are, indeed, the dominating notes of her poetry rather than mere commonplace hope:—

> I am bound for the land of Beulah,
> There all the guests sing Hallelujah.
> No longer time here let us squander,
> But on the good things promised ponder.

It would be futile to discuss the exact position on Parnassus of a lady whose throne was secured on a more celestial mountain, even more difficult of access. But I think we may claim for her an honourable place in that new Oxford school of poetry of which Professor Mackail officially knows little, and of which Dr. Warren (the President of Magdalen) is the distinguished living protagonist. With all her acrid Evangelicalism she was a good soul, for she was fond of animals and children, and kind to them both in her own way; so I am sure some of

her dreams have been realised, even if there has reached her nostrils just a whiff of those tolerating purgatorial fires which, spelt differently, she believed to be *permanently* prepared for the vast majority of her contemporaries.

To Mrs. Carew.

GOING UP TOP.

DURING the closing years of the last century certain critics contracted a rather depressing habit of numbering men of letters, especially poets, as though they were overcoats in a cloak-room, or boys competing in an examination set by themselves. 'It requires very little discernment,' wrote the late Churton Collins, A.D. 1891, 'to foresee that among the English poets of the present century the first place will *ultimately* be assigned to Wordsworth, the second to Byron, and the third to Shelley.' Matthew Arnold, I fear, was the first to make these unsafe Zadkielian prognostications. He, if I remember correctly, gave Byron the first place and Wordsworth the second; but Swinburne, with his usual discernment, observed that English taste in that eventuality would be in the same state as it was at the end of the seventeenth century, which firmly believed

that Fletcher and Jonson were the best of its poets.

But when is Ultimately? Obviously not the present moment. Byron does not hold the rank awarded him by the distinguished critic in 1891. The cruel test of the auctioneer's hammer has recently shown that Keats and Shelley are regarded as far more important by those unprejudiced judges, the book-dealers. Wordsworth, of course, is still one of the poets' poets, and the *Spectator*, that Mrs. Micawber of literature, will, of course, never desert him; but I doubt very much whether he has yet reached the harbour of Ultimately. His repellent personality has blinded a good many of us to his exquisite qualities; on the Greek Kalends of criticism, however, may I be there to see. I shall certainly vote for him if I am one of the examiners—or one of the cloak-room attendants.

It was against such kind of criticism that Whistler hurled his impatient epigram about pigeon-holes. And if it is absurd in regard to painting, how much more absurd is it in regard to the more various and less friable substances of literature. By the old ten-o'clock

rule (I do not refer to Whistler's lecture), once observed in Board schools, no scripture could be taught after that hour. Once a teacher asked his class who was the wisest man. 'Solomon,' said a little boy. 'Right; go up top,' said the teacher. But there was a small pedant who, while never paying much attention to the lessons, and being usually at the bottom of the form in consequence, knew the regulations by heart. He interrupted with a shrill voice (for the clock had passed the hour), 'No, sir, please, sir; past ten o'clock, sir . . . . Solon.' Thus it is, I fear, with critics of every generation, though they try very hard to make the time pass as slowly as possible.

But if invidious distinctions between great men are inexact and tiresome, I opine that it is ungenerous and ignoble to declare that when a great man has just died, we really cannot judge of him or his work because we have been his contemporaries. The caution of obituary notices seems to me cowardly, and the reviews of books are cowardly too. We have become Laodiceans. We are even fearful of exposing imposture in current

literature lest we get into hot water with a publisher.

During a New Year week I was invited by Lord and Lady Lyonesse to a very diverting house-party. This peer, it will be remembered, is the well-known radical philanthropist who owed his title to a lifelong interest in the submerged tenth. Their house, Ivanhoe, is an exquisite gothic structure not unjustly regarded as the masterpiece of the late Sir Gilbert Scott: it overlooks the Ouse. Including our hosts we numbered forty persons, and the personnel, including valets, chauffeurs, and ladies'-maids brought by the guests, numbered sixty. In all, we were a hundred souls, assuming immortality for the chauffeurs and the five Scotch gardeners. On January 2nd somebody produced after dinner a copy of the *Petit Parisien* relating the plebiscite for the greatest Frenchman of the nineteenth century; another guest capped him with the *Evening News* list. The famous *Pall Mall Gazette* Academy of Forty was recalled with indifferent accuracy. Conversation was flagging; our hostess looked relieved; very soon we were all playing a

variation of that most charming game, *suck-pencil.*

At first we decided to ignore the nineteenth century. The ten greatest living Englishmen were to be named by our votes. Bridge and billiard players were dragged to the polling-station in the green drawing-room. Lord Lyonesse and myself were the tellers. I shivered with excitement. One of the Ultimatelies of Churton Collins seemed to have arrived: it was Götterdämmerung—the Twilight of the Idols. And here is the result of the ballot, which I think every one will admit possesses extraordinary interest:

Hall Caine.	Hichens.
Marie Corelli.	Chamberlain.
Rudyard Kipling.	Barrie.
Lord Northcliffe.	George Alexander.
Sir Thomas Lipton.	Beerbohm Tree.

I ought to add, of course, that the guests were unusually intellectual. There were our host and hostess, their three sons — one is a scholar of King's College, Cambridge, another is at Balliol, and a third is a stockbroker; there were five M.P.'s with their wives

(two Liberal Imperialists, two Liberal Unionists, and one real Radical), a Scotch peer with his wife and an Irish peer without one; a publisher and his wife; three Academicians; four journalists; an Irish poet, a horse-dealer, a picture-dealer, another stock-broker, an artist, two lady novelists, a baronet and his wife, three musicians; and Myself. I think the only point on which the sincerity of the voting might be doubted, is the ominous absence of any soldier's name on the list. Lord Lyonesse, however, is a firm upholder of the Hague Conference: like myself, he is a pro-Boer, but he will not allow any reference to military affairs, and I suspect that it was out of deference to his wishes that the guests all abstained from writing down some names of our gallant generals. Lord Kitchener, however, obtained nine votes, and I myself included Christian De Wet; but on discovery of documents he was ruled out, in spite of my pleading for him on imperialistic grounds. I thought it rather insular, too, I must confess, that Mr. Henry James and Mr. Sargent were denied to me because they are American subjects. My own final list, as pasted in the

Album at Ivanhoe, along with others, was as follows:

H. G. Wells.	Edmund Gosse.
C. H. Shannon.	Andrew Lang.
Bernard Shaw.	Oliver Lodge.
Thomas Hardy.	Dom Gasquet.
Lord Northcliffe.	Reginald Turner.

Mine, of course, is the choice of a recluse: a scholar without scholarship, one who lives remote from politics, newspapers, society, and the merry-go-round of modern life. Its two chief interests lie in showing, first how far off I was from getting the prize (a vellum copy of poems, by our hostess), and secondly, that one name only, that of Lord Northcliffe, should have touched both the popular and the private imagination! I regret to say that none of the guests knew the names of Dom Gasquet or Sir Oliver Lodge. Every one, except the artist, thought C. H. Shannon was J. J. Shannon, and some of the voters were hardly convinced that Mr. Lang was still an ornament to contemporary literature. The prize was awarded to a lady whose list most nearly corresponded to the result of the general plébiscite. I need not say she

was the wife of the publisher. After some suitable expressions from Lord Lyonesse, it was suggested that we should poll the servants' hall. Pencils and paper were provided and the butler was sent for. An hour was given for the election, and at half-past eleven the ballot papers were brought in on a massive silver tray discreetly covered with a red silk pocket-handkerchief, and here is the result:

Frank Richardson.	T. P. O'Connor.
Marie Corelli.	Lord Lyonesse.
John Roberts.	Dr. Williams (Pink Pills for Pale People).
C. B. Fry.	
Eustace Miles.	
Robert Hichens.	Hall Caine.

The prize (and this is another odd coincidence) was won by the butler himself, to whom, very generously, the publisher's wife resigned the vellum copy of our hostess's poems. From a literary point of view, it is interesting to note that Mr. Frank Richardson is the only master of *belles lettres* who is appreciated in the servants' hall! The other names we associate, rightly or wrongly, with something other than literature.

The following evening I suggested choosing

the greatest English names in the nineteenth century (twentieth-century life being strictly excluded). Every one by this time had caught the *suck-pencil* fever. By general consent the suffrage was extended to the domestics: the electorate being thus one hundred. And what, you will ask, came of it all? I suggest that readers should guess. Any one interested should fill up, cut out, and send this coupon to my own publisher on April the first.

I think the Ten Greatest Englishmen of the Nineteenth Century were:

1 .....
2 .....
3 .....
4 .....
5 .....
6 .....
7 .....
8 .....
9 .....
10 .....

A prize, consisting of a copy of *Books of To-Day and Books of To-Morrow*, will be awarded for the best shot.

MR. BENSON'S 'PATER.'

IN no other country has mediocrity such a chance as in England. The second-rate writer, the second-rate painter meets with an almost universal and immediate recognition. When good mediocrities die, if they do not go straight to heaven (from a country where the existence of Purgatory is denied by Act of Parliament), at least they run a very fair chance of burial in Westminster Abbey. 'De mortuis nil nisi *bonus*,' in the shape of royalties, is the real test by which we estimate the authors who have just passed away. A few of our great writers—Ruskin and Tennyson, for example—have enjoyed the applause accorded to senility by a people usually timid of brilliancy and strength, when it is contemporary. The ruins of mental faculties touch our imagination, owing, perhaps, to that tenderness for antiquity which has preserved for us the remains of Tintern Abbey. Seldom, however, does a great writer live to

find himself, in the prime of his literary existence, a component part of English literature. Yet there are happy exceptions, and not the least of these was Walter Pater.

His inclusion in the *English Men of Letters* series, so soon after his death, somewhat dazzled the reviewers. Mr. Benson was complimented on a daring which, if grudgingly endorsed, is treated as just the sort of innovation you would expect from the brother of the author of *Dodo*. 'To a small soul the age which has borne it can appear only an age of small souls,' says Swinburne, and the presence of Pater, which rose so strangely beside our waters, seemed to many of his contemporaries only the last sob of a literature which they sincerely believed came to an end with Lord Macaulay.

It was a fortunate chance by which Mr. A. C. Benson, one of our more discerning critics, himself master of no mean style, should have been chosen as commentator of Pater. Among the plutarchracy of the present day a not very pretty habit prevails of holding a sort of inquest on deceased writers—a reaction against misplaced eulogy—tearing them

and their works to pieces, and leaving nothing for reviewers or posterity to dissipate. From the author of the *Upton Letters* we expect sympathy and critical acumen. It is needless to say we are never disappointed. His book is not merely about a literary man: it is a work of literature itself. So it is charming to disagree with Mr. Benson sometimes, and a triumph to find him tripping. You experience the pleasure of the University Extension lecturer pointing out the mistakes in Shakespeare's geography, the joy of the schoolboy when the master has made a false quantity. In marking the modern discoveries which have shattered, not the value of Pater's criticisms, but the authenticity of pictures round which he wove his aureoles of prose, Mr. Benson says: 'In the essay on Botticelli he is on firmer ground.' But among the first masterpieces winged by the sportsmen of the new criticism was the Hamilton Palace 'Assumption of the Virgin' (now proved to be by Botticini), to which Pater makes one of his elusive and delightful allusions. While the '*School of Giorgione*,' which Mr. Benson thinks a little *passé* in the light of modern

research is now in the movement. The latest bulletins of Giorgione, Pater would have been delighted to hear, are highly satisfactory. Pictures once torn from the altars of authenticity are being reinstated under the acolytage of Mr. Herbert Cook. A curious and perhaps wilful error, too, has escaped Mr. Benson's notice. Referring to the tomb of Cardinal Jacopo at San Miniato, Pater says, 'insignis forma fui—his epitaph dares to say;' the inscription reads *fuit*. But perhaps the *t* was added by the Italian Government out of deference to the English residents in Florence, and the word read *fui* in 1871. *Troja fuit* might be written all over Florence.

Then some of the architecture at Vezelay 'typical of Cluniac sculpture' is pure Viollet-le-Duc, I am assured by a competent authority. A more serious error of Pater's, for it is adjectival, not a fact, occurs in *Apollo in Picardy*—'*rebellious* masses of black hair.' This is the only instance in the *parfait prosateur*, as Bourget called him, of a cliché worthy of the 'Spectator.' Then it is possible to differ from Mr. Benson in his criticism of the *Imaginary Portraits* (the four fair ovals

in one volume), surely Pater's most exquisite achievement after the *Renaissance*. *Gaston* is the failure Pater thought it was, and *Emerald Uthwart* is frankly very silly, though Mr. Benson has a curious tenderness for it. One sentence he abandons as absolute folly. The grave psychological error in the story occurs where the surgeon expresses compunction at making the autopsy on Uthwart because of his perfect anatomy. Surely this would have been a source of technical pleasure and interest to a surgeon, much as a butterfly-collector is pleased when he has murdered an unusually fine species of lepidoptera. Speaking myself as a vivisector of some experience, I can confidently affirm that a well-bred golden collie is far more interesting to operate upon than a mongrel sheep-dog. Nor can I comprehend Mr. Benson's blame of *Denys l'Auxerrois* as too extravagant and even unwholesome, when the last quality, so obvious in *Uthwart*, he seems to condone.

Again, *Marius the Epicurean* is a failure by Pater's own high standard: you would have imagined it seemed so to Mr. Benson.

Dulness is by no means its least fault. In scheme it is not unlike *John Inglesant*; but how lifeless are the characters compared with those of Shorthouse. Both books deal with philosophic ideas and sensations; the incidents are merely illustrative and there is hardly a pretence of sequence. In the historical panorama which moves behind *Inglesant*, there are at least 'tactile' values, and seventeenth-century England is conjured up in a wonderful way; how accurately I do not know. In *Marius* the background is merely a backcloth for mental *poses plastiques*. You wonder, not how still the performers are, but why they move at all. Marcus Aurelius, the delightful Lucian, even Flavian, and the rest, are busts from the Capitoline and Naples museums. Their bodies are make-believe, or straw from the loft at 'White Nights.' Cornelius, Mr. Benson sorrowfully admits, is a Christian prig, but Marius is only a pagan chip from the same block. John Inglesant is a prig too, but there is blood in his veins, and you get, at all events, a Vandyck, not a plaster cast. The magnificent passages of prose which vest this image make it resemble

the *ex voto* Madonnas of continental churches —a shrine in literature but not a lighthouse.

I sometimes wonder what Pater would have become had he been a Cambridge man, and if the more strenuous University might have *forced* him into greater sympathy with modernity; or if he had been born in America, as he nearly was, and Harvard acted as the benign stepmother of his days. Such speculations are not beyond all conjecture, as Sir Thomas Browne said. I think he would have been exactly the same.

On the occasion of Pater's lecture on Prosper Merimée, his friends gathered round the platform to congratulate him; he expressed a hope that the audience was able to hear what he said. 'We overheard you,' said Oscar Wilde. 'Ah, you have a phrase for everything,' replied the lecturer, the only contemporary who ever influenced himself, Wilde declared. How admirable both of the criticisms! Pater is an aside in literature, and that is why he was sometimes overlooked, and may be so again in ages to come. Though he is the greatest master of style the century produced, he

can never be regarded as part of the structure of English prose. He is, rather, one of the ornaments, which often last, long after a structure has perished. His place will be shifted, as fashions change. Like some exquisite piece of eighteenth-century furniture perchance he may be forgotten in the attics of literature awhile, only to be rediscovered. And as Fuseli said of Blake, 'he is damned good to steal from.' If he uses words as though they were pigments, and sentences like vestments at the Mass, it is not merely the ritualistic cadence of his harmonies which makes his works imperishable, but the ideas which they symbolise and evoke. Pater thinks beautifully always, about things which some people do not think altogether beautiful, perhaps; and sometimes he thinks aloud. We overhear him, and feel almost the shame of the eavesdropper.

Mr. Benson has approached Walter Pater, the man, with almost sacerdotal deference. He suggests ingeniously where you can find the self-revelation in *Gaston* and *The Child in the House*. This is far more illuminating than the recollections of personal friends

whose reminiscences are modelled on those of Captain Sumph. Mr. Humphry Ward remembers Pater only once being angry—it was in the Common Room—it was with X, an elderly man! The subject of the difference was 'modern lectures.' 'Relations between them were afterwards strained.' Mr. Arthur Symons remembers that he intended to bring out a new volume of *Imaginary Portraits*. Fancy that! Really, when friends begin to tell stories of that kind, I begin to suspect they are trying to conceal something. Perhaps we have no right to know everything or anything about the amazing personalities of literature; but Henleys and Purcells lurk and leak out even at Oxford; and that is not the way to silence them. Just when the aureole is ready to be fitted on, some horrid graduate (Litteræ *in*humaniores) inks the statue. Anticipating something of the kind, Mr. Benson is careful to insist on the divergence between Rossetti and Pater, and on page eighty-six says something which is ludicrously untrue. If self-revelation can be traced in *Gaston*, it can be found elsewhere. There are sentences in *Hippolytus Veiled*, the *Age of the Athletic*

Prizemen, and *Apollo in Picardy*, which not only explode Mr. Benson's suggestions, but illustrate the objections he urges against *Denys l'Auxerrois*. They are passages where Pater thinks aloud. If Rossetti wore his heart on the sleeve, Pater's was just above the cuff, like a bangle; though it slips down occasionally in spite of the alb which drapes the hieratic writer not always discreetly.

(1906.)

SIMEON SOLOMON.

A GOOD many years ago, before the Rhodes scholars invaded Oxford, there lingered in that home of lost causes and unpopular names, the afterglow of the æsthetic sunset. It was not a very brilliant period. Professor Mackail and Mr. Bowyer Nichols had left Balliol. Nothing was expected of either the late Sir Clinton Dawkins or Canon Beeching; and the authorities of Merton could form no idea where Mr. Beerbohm would complete his education. Names are more suggestive than dates and give less pain. Then, as now, there were 'cultured' undergraduates, and those who were very cultured indeed, read Shelley and burned incense, would always have a few photographs after Simeon Solomon on their walls—little notes of illicit sentiment to vary the monotony of Burne-Jones and Botticelli. When uncles and aunts came up for Gaudys and Commem., while 'Temperantia' and the 'Primavera'

were left in their places, 'Love dying from the breath of Lust,' 'Antinous,' and other drawings by Solomon with titles from the Latin Vulgate, were taken down for the occasion. Views of the sister University, Cambridge took their places, being more appropriate to Uncle Parker's and Aunt Jane's tastes. More advanced undergraduates, who 'knew what things were,' possessed even originals. Now the unfortunate artist is dead his career can be mentioned without prejudice.

Simeon Solomon was born in 1841. He was the third son of Michael Solomon, a manufacturer of Leghorn hats, and the first Jew ever admitted to the Freedom of London. The elder brother, Abraham, became a successful painter of popular subjects ('Waiting for the Verdict' and 'First and Third Class'), and died on the day of his election to the Academy! Rebecca a sister who was also a painter, copied with success some of Millais's pictures. At the age of sixteen Simeon exhibited at the Academy, though beyond a short training at Leigh's Art School in Newman Street he was almost self-taught.

He was an early and intimate friend of the Pre-Raphaelites, with whose art he had much in common, though it is only for convenience that he is included in the school. Like Whistler, he was profoundly affected by the genius of Rossetti. Racial and other causes removed him from any real affinity to the archaistic moralatarianism of Mr. Holman Hunt. For obvious reasons the Pre-Raphaelite memoirs are silent about him, but Burne-Jones was said to have maintained, in after years, 'that he was the greatest artist of us all.' Throughout the sixties Solomon was one of those black-and-white draughtsmen whose contributions to the magazines have made the period famous in English art. He found ready purchasers for his pictures and drawings, not only among the well-to-do Hebrew community, such as Dr. Ernest Hart, his brother's brother-in-law, but with well-known Christian collectors like Mr. Leathart. He was on intimate terms with Walter Pater, of whom he executed one of the only two known portraits; and in the *Greek Studies* will be found a graceful reference to the 'young Hebrew painter' whose 'Bacchus' at

the Academy obviously contributed to the 'gem-like' flame of which we have heard so much.

In a short-lived magazine, the *Dark Blue*, of July 1871, may be found a characteristic review by Swinburne of Solomon's strange rhapsody, *A Vision of Love Revealed in Sleep*, his only literary work, now a great rarity. This is the longest, and with one exception the most interesting, tribute to Solomon ever published. 'Since the first years of his early and brilliant celebrity as a young artist of high imagination, power, and promise,' Swinburne says, 'he has been at work long enough to enable us to define at least certain salient and dominant points of his genius. . . . . I have heard him likened to Heine as a kindred Hellenist of the Hebrews; Grecian form and beauty divide the allegiance of his spirit with Hebrew shadow and majesty.' It would be difficult to add anything further, in praise of the unfortunate artist, to the poet's eloquent eulogy of his friend's talents. An interesting piece of autobiography is afforded in the same article, where Swinburne tells us that his

own poem of 'Erotion,' in the first series of *Poems and Ballads*, was written for a drawing by Simeon Solomon; and in another number of the same magazine there appeared 'The End of the Month,' to accompany a new design of Solomon's, the poem appearing later in the second series of *Poems and Ballads*. Very few English artists—not even Millais—began life with fairer prospects. Thackeray wrote in one of the 'Roundabout Papers' for 1860: 'For example, one of the pictures I admired most at the Royal Academy is by a gentleman on whom I never, to my knowledge, set eyes. The picture is (346) "Moses," by S. Solomon. I thought it finely drawn and composed. It nobly represented to my mind the dark children of the Egyptian bondage. . . . . My newspaper says: "Two ludicrously ugly women, looking at a dingy baby, do not form a pleasing object," and so good-bye, Mr. S. S.' This beautiful picture, painted when the artist was only nineteen, is now in the collection of Mr. W. G. Rawlinson, and was seen quite recently at the Franco-British Exhibition, where those familiar with his work considered it one of Solomon's master-

pieces. Very few students of Thackeray realised, however, that the painter thus singled out for praise formed the subject of a sordid inquest reported in the *Times* of August 18th, 1905.

That Solomon's pictures were at first better known to the public than those of his now more famous associates is shown by Robert Buchanan confessing that he had scarcely seen any of their works except those of Solomon, which he proceeded to attack in the famous *The Fleshly School of Poetry.* As a sort of justification of the criticism, in the early seventies, the extraordinary artist had become a pariah. He was imprisoned for a short while, and on his release was placed in a private asylum by his friends. Scandal having subsided, since he showed no further signs of eccentricity, he was, by arrangement, sent out to post a letter in order that he might have a chance of quietly escaping and returning to the practice of his art. He returned to the asylum in half an hour!—a proceeding which was almost an evidence of insanity. He was subsequently officially dismissed, and from this time went steadily downhill, adding to

his other vices that of intemperance. Every effort was made by friends and relatives to reclaim him. Studios were taken for him, commissions were given him, clothes were bought for him. He spent his week-ends in the lock-up. Several picture-dealers tried giving him an allowance, but he turned up intoxicated to demand advances, and the police had to be called in. He was found selling matches in the Mile End Road and tried his hand at pavement decoration without much success. The companion of Walter Pater and Swinburne became the associate of thieves and blackmailers. A story is told that one afternoon he called for assistance at the house of a well-known artist, a former friend, from whom he received a generous dole. Observing that the remote neighbourhood of the place lent itself favourably to burgling operations, Solomon visited his benefactor the same evening in company with a housebreaker. They were studying the dining-room silver when they were disturbed; both were in liquor, and the noise they made roused the sleepers above. The unwilling host good-naturedly dismissed them!

Though a very delightful book might be made of his life by some one who would not shirk the difficulties of the subject, it is unnecessary here to dwell further on a career which belongs to the history of morbid psychology rather than of painting. After drifting from the stream of social existence into a Bohemian backwater, he found himself in the main sewer. This he thoroughly enjoyed in his own particular way, and rejected fiercely all attempts at rescue or reform. To his other old friends, such as Burne-Jones and Sir Edward Poynter, there must have been something very tragic in the contemplation of his wasted talents, for few young painters were more successful. Any one curious enough to study his pictures will regret that he was lost to art by allowing an ill-regulated life to prey upon his genius. He had not sufficient strength to keep the two things separate, as Shakespeare, Verlaine, and Leonardo succeeded in doing. At the same time, it is a consolation to think that he enjoyed himself in his own sordid way. When I had the pleasure of seeing him last, so lately as 1893, he was extremely cheerful and not aggressively alco-

holic. Unlike most spoilt wastrels with the artistic temperament, he seemed to have no grievances, and had no bitter stories or complaints about former friends, no scandalous tales about contemporaries who had remained reputable; no indignant feeling towards those who assisted him. This was an amiable, inartistic trait in his character, though it may be a trifle negative; and for a positive virtue, as I say, he enjoyed his drink, his overpowering dirt, and his vicious life. He was full of delightful and racy stories about poets and painters, policemen and prisons, of which he had wide experience. He might have written a far more diverting book of memoirs than the average Pre-Raphaelite volume to which we look forward every year, though it is usually silent about poor Simeon Solomon. Physically he was a small, red man, with keen, laughing eyes.

By 1887 he entirely ceased to produce work of any value. He poured out a quantity of pastels at a guinea apiece. They are repulsive and ill-drawn, with the added horror of being the shadows of once splendid achievements. Long after his name could be ever

mentioned except in whispers, Mr. Hollyer issued a series of photographs of some of the fine early sanguine, Indian ink, and pencil drawings. The originals are unique of their kind. It is very easy to detect the unwholesome element which has inspired many of them, even the titles being indicative: 'Sappho,' 'Antinous,' 'Amor Sacramentum.' One of the finest, 'Love dying from the breath of Lust,' of which also he painted a picture, became quite popular in reproduction owing to the moral which was screwed out of it. Another, of 'Dante meeting Beatrice at a Child's Party,' is particularly fascinating. To the present generation his work is perhaps too 'literary,' and his technique is by no means faultless; but the slightest drawing is informed by an idea, nearly always a beautiful one, however exotic. The faceless head and the headless body of shivering models dear to modern art students were absent from Solomon's designs. His pigments, both in water-colour and oils, are always harmonious, pure in tone, and rich without being garish. We need not try to frighten ourselves by searching too curiously for hidden meanings. His whole art is, of

course, unwholesome and morbid, to employ two very favourite adjectives. His work has always appealed to musicians and men of letters rather than collectors—to those who ask that a drawing or a picture should suggest an idea rather than the art of the artist. Subject with him triumphs over drawing. He is sometimes hopelessly crude; but during the sixties, when, as some one said, 'every one was a great artist,' he showed considerable promise of draughtsmanship. His pictures are less fantastic than the drawings, and aim at probability, even when they are allegorical, or, as is too often the case, *odd* in sentiment. He is apparently never concerned with what are called 'problems,' the articulation of forms, or any fidelity to nature beyond the human frame. Unlike many of the Pre-Raphaelites, he showed a feeling for the medium of oil. His friends and contemporaries, with the exception of Millais, and Rossetti occasionally, were always more at ease with water-colour or gouache, and you feel that most of their pictures ought to have been painted in *tempera*, the technique of which was not then understood. Since Millais was of French extraction,

Rossetti of Italian, and Solomon of Hebrew, I fear this does not get us very much further away from the old French criticism that the English had forgotten or never learnt how to paint in oil. It must be remembered that Whistler, who in the sixties achieved some of his masterpieces, was an American.

It is strange that Solomon did not allow a sordid existence to alter the trend of his subjects, for these are always derived from poetry and the Bible, or from Catholic, Jewish, or Greek Orthodox ritual — a strange contrast to the respectable, impeccable painter, M. Degas, the doyen of European art, nationalist and anti-Semite, who finds beauty only in brasseries, in the vulgar circus, and in the ghastly wings of the opera. How far removed from his surroundings are the inspirations of the artist! I believe J. F. Millet would have painted peasants if he had been born and spent his days in the centre of New York. With the life-long friend of M. Degas—Gustave Moreau—Solomon had much in common, but the colour of the English Hebrew is much finer, and his themes are less monotonous. I can imagine many people being repelled by

this troubled introspective art, especially at the present day. There is hardly room for an inverted Watts. At the same time, even those who from age and training cannot take a sentimental interest in faded rose-leaves, whose perfume is a little overpowering, may care to explore an interesting byway of art. For poor Solomon there was no place in life. Casting reality aside, he stepped back into the riotous pages of Petronius. Perhaps on the Paris boulevards, with Verlaine and Bibi la Purée, he might have enjoyed a distinct artistic individuality. Expeditions conducted by Mr. Arthur Symons might have been organized in order to view him at some popular café. Mr. George Moore might have written about him. But in respectable London he was quite impossible In the temple of Art, which is less Calvinistic than artists would have us suppose, he will always have his niche. To the future English Vasari he will be a real gold-mine.

(1905.)

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

MIDDLE-AGED, middle-class people, with a predilection for mediæval art, still believe that subject is an important factor in a picture or drawing. I am one of the number. The subject need not be literary or historical. After you have discussed in the latest studio jargon its carpentry, valued the tones and toned the values, motive or theme must affect your appreciation of a picture, your desire, or the contrary, to possess it. That the artist is able to endow the unattractive, and woo you to surrender, I admit. Unless, however, you are a pro-Boer in art matters, and hold that Rembrandt and the Boer school (the greatest technicians who ever lived) are finer artists than Titian, you will find yourself preferring Gainsborough to Degas, and the unskilful Whistler to the more accomplished Edouard Manet. Long ago French critics invented an æsthetic formula to conceal that poverty of imagination

which sometimes stares from their perfectly executed pictures, and this was eagerly accepted by certain Englishmen, both painters and writers. Yet, when an artist frankly deals with forbidden subjects, the canons regular of English art begin to thunder; the critics forget their French accent; the old Robert Adam, which is in all of us, asserts himself; we fly for the fig-leaves.

I am led to these reflections by the memory of Aubrey Beardsley, and the reception which his work received, not from the British public, but from the inner circle of advanced intellectuals. Too much occupied with the obstetrics of art, his superfluity of naughtiness has tarnished his niche in the temple of fame. 'A wish to *épater le bourgeois*,' says Mr. Arthur Symons, 'is a natural one.' I do not think so; at least, in an artist. Now much of Beardsley's work shows the *éblouissement* of the burgess on arriving at Montmartre for the first time—a weakness he shared with some of his contemporaries. This must be conceded in praising a great artist for a line which he never drew, after you have taken the immortal Zero's advice and divested yourself of the scruples.

'I would rather be an Academician than an artist,' said Aubrey Beardsley to me one day. 'It takes thirty-nine men to make an Academician, and only one to make an artist.' In that sneer lay all his weakness and his strength. Grave friends (in those days it was the fashion) talked to him of 'Dame Nature.' '*Damn Nature!*' retorted Aubrey Beardsley, and pulled down the blinds and worked by gaslight on the finest days. But he was a real Englishman, who from his glass-house peppered the English public. No Latin could have contrived his arabesque. The grotesques of Jerome Bosch are positively pleasant company beside many of Beardsley's inventions. Even in his odd little landscapes, with their twisted promontories sloping seaward, he suggested mocking laughter; and the flowers of 'Under the Hill' are cackling in the grass.

An essay, which Mr. Arthur Symons published in 1897, has always been recognised as far the most sympathetic and introspective account of this strange artist's work. It has been reissued, with additional illustrations, by Messrs. Dent. Those who welcome it as one of the most inspiring criticisms from an always

inspired critic, will regret that eight of the illustrations belong to the worst period of Beardsley's art. Kelmscott dyspepsia following on a surfeit of Burne-Jones, belongs to the pathology of style; it is a phase that should be produced by the prosecution, not by the eloquent advocate for the defence. Moreover, I do not believe Mr. Arthur Symons admires them any more than I do; he never mentions them in his text. 'Le Débris d'un Poète,' the 'Coiffing,' 'Chopin's Third Ballad,' and those for *Salome* would have sufficed. With these omissions the monograph might have been smaller; but it would have been more truly representative of Beardsley's genius and Mr. Arthur Symons's taste.

At one time or another every one has been brilliant about Beardsley. 'Born Puck, he died Pierrot,' said Mr. MacColl in one of the superb phrases with which he gibbets into posterity an art or an artist he rather dislikes. 'The Fra Angelico of Satanism,' wrote Mr. Roger Fry of an exhibition of the drawings. There seems hardly anything left even for Mr. Arthur Symons to write. Long

anterior to these particular fireworks, however, his criticism is just as fresh as it was twelve years ago. I believe it will always remain the terminal essay.

The preface has been revised, and I could have wished for some further revision. Why is the name of Leonard Smithers—here simply called *a* publisher—omitted, when the other Capulets and Montagus are faithfully recorded? When no one would publish Beardsley's work, Smithers stepped into the breach. I do not know that the *Savoy* exactly healed the breach between Beardsley and the public, but it gave the artist another opportunity; and Mr. Arthur Symons an occasion for song. Leonard Smithers, too, was the most delightful and irresponsible publisher I ever knew. Who remembers without a kindly feeling the little shop in the Royal Arcade with its tempting shelves; its limited editions of *5000* copies; the shy, infrequent purchaser; the upstairs room where the roar of respectable Bond Street came faintly through the tightly-closed windows; the genial proprietor? In the closing years of the nineteenth century his silhouette reels (my

metaphor is drawn from a Terpsichorean and Caledonian exercise) across an artistic horizon of which the *Savoy* was the afterglow. Again, why is Mr. Arthur Symons so precise about forgetting the date of Beardsley's expulsion from the *Yellow Book?* It was in April 1895, April 10th. A number of poets and writers blackmailed Mr. Lane by threatening to withdraw their own publications unless the Beardsley Body was severed from the Bodley Head. I am glad to have this opportunity, not only of paying a tribute to the courage of my late friend Smithers, but of defending my other good friend, Mr. John Lane, from the absurd criticism of which he was too long the victim. He could hardly be expected to wreck a valuable business in the cause of unpopular art. Quite wrongly Beardsley's designs had come to be regarded as the pictorial and sympathetic expression of a decadent tendency in English literature. But if there was any relation thereto, it was that of Juvenal towards Roman Society. Never was mordant satire more evident. If Beardsley is carried away in spite of himself by the superb invention of *Salome*, he never forgets his

hatred of its author. It is characteristic that he hammered beauty from the gold he would have battered into caricature. *Salome* has survived other criticism and other caricature. And Mr. Lane once informed an American interviewer that since that April Fool's Day poetry has ceased to sell altogether. The bards unconsciously committed suicide; and the *Yellow Book* perished in the odour of sanctity.

Recommending the perusal of some letters (written by Beardsley to an unnamed friend) published some years ago, Mr. Arthur Symons says: 'Here, too, we are in the presence of the real thing.' I venture to doubt this. I do not doubt Beardsley's sincerity in the religion he embraced, but his expression of it in the letters. At least, I hope it was insincere. The letters left on some of us a disagreeable impression, at least of the recipient. You wonder if this pietistic friend received a copy of the *Lysistrata* along with the eulogy of St. Alfonso Liguori and Aphra Behn. A fescennine temperament is too often allied with religiosity. It certainly was in Beardsley's case, but I think the other

and stronger side of his character should, in justice to his genius, be insisted upon, as Mr. Arthur Symons insisted upon it. If we knew that the ill-advised and unnamed friend was the author of certain pseudo-scientific and pornographic works issued in Paris, we should be better able to gauge the unimportance of these letters. Far more interesting would have been those written to Mr. Joseph Pennell, one of the saner influences; or those to Aubrey Beardsley's mother and sister.

'It was at Arques,' says Mr. Arthur Symons . . . . 'that I had the only serious, almost solemn conversation I ever had with Beardsley.' You can scarcely believe that any of the conversations between the two were other than serious and solemn, because he approaches Beardsley as he would John Bunyan or Aquinas. Art, literature and life, are all to this engaging writer a scholiast's pilgrim's progress. Beside him, Walter Pater, from whom he derives, seems almost flippant—and to have dallied too long in the streets of Vanity Fair.

(1906.)

ENGLISH ÆSTHETICS.

THE law reports in newspapers contain perhaps the only real history of England that has any relation to truth. Here, too, may be found indications of current thought, more pregnant than the observations of historians. They still afford material for the future short or longer history of the English people by the John Richard Greens of posterity. This was brought home to me by perusing two cases reported in the *Morning Post*, that of Mrs. Rita Marsh and the disputed will of Miss Browne. I yield to no one in my ignorance of English law, but I have seldom read judgments which seemed so conspicuously unfair, so characteristic of the precise minimum of æsthetic perception in the English people.

The hostelries of Great Britain are famous for their high charges, their badly-kept rooms, and loathsome cooking; let me add, their warm welcome. In the reign of Edward III. there

was legislation on the subject. The colder and cheaper hospitality of the Continent strikes a chill, I am sometimes told by those familiar with both. The hotel selected by a certain Mrs. Rita Marsh was no exception to the ordinary English caravanserai. It was 'replete with every comfort.' The garden contained an *oubliette*, down which Mrs. Marsh, while walking in the evening, inadvertently fell. On the Continent the *oubliettes* are inside the house, and you are ostentatiously warned of their immediate neighbourhood. These things are managed better in France, if I may say so without offending Tariff Reformers.

The accident disfigured Mrs. Marsh for life; and for the loss of unusual personal attractions an English jury awarded her only 500*l.* The judge made a joke about it. Mr. Gill was very playful about her photograph, and every one, except, I imagine, Mrs. Marsh, seems to have been satisfied that ample justice was done. The hotel proprietors did not press their counter-claim for a bill of 191*l.*! Chivalrous fellows! Still, I can safely say that in France Mrs. Marsh would have been awarded at least four times that amount; though if she had

been murdered the proprietors would have only been fined forty francs. But beauty to its fortunate possessors is more valuable than life itself, and the story is to me one of the most pathetic I have ever heard. To the English mind there is something irresistibly comic when any one falls, morally or physically. It is the basis of English Farce. Jokes made about those who have never fallen, 'too great to appease, too high to appal,' are voted bad taste. Caricaturists of the mildest order are considered irreligious and vulgar if they burlesque, say, the Archbishop of Canterbury for example; or unpatriotic if they hint that Lord Roberts did not really finish the Boer War when he professed to have done so. After Parnell came to grief I remember the Drury Lane pantomime was full of fire-escapes, and every allusion to the *cause célèbre* produced roars of laughter. Mr. Justice Bigham was only a thorough Englishman when he gently rallied the jury for awarding, as he obviously thought, excessive damages. So little is beauty esteemed in England.

The case of Miss Browne was also singular. She left a trust fund 'for the erection of an

ornamental structure of Gothic design, such as a market cross, tall clock, street lamp-stand, or all combined, in a central part of London, the plan whereof shall be offered for open competition, and ultimately decided upon by the Royal Institute of British Architects.' The President of the Probate Division said *he was satisfied that Miss Browne was not of sound mind, and pronounced against the will*, with costs out of the estate. I wonder what the Royal Institute thinks of this legal testimonial. It seems almost a pity that some one did not dispute Sir Francis Chantrey's will years ago on similar grounds. I suggest to Mr. MacColl that it might still be upset. That would settle once and for all the question whether the administration of the bequest has evinced evidence of insanity or not. A recent Royal Commission left the matter undecided. I do not, however, wish to criticise trustees, but to defend the memory of Miss Browne (who may have been eccentric in private life) from such a charge, because her testamentary dispositions were a trifle æsthetic. The will was un-English in one respect: '*no inscription of my name shall*

be placed on such erection.' Was that the clause which proved her hopelessly mad? The erection was to be Gothic. I know Gothic is out of fashion just now. Ruskin is quite over; the Seven Lamps exploded long ago; but Miss Browne seems to have attended before her death Mr. MacColl's lectures, knew all about 'masses' and 'tones' in architecture, and wished particular stress to be laid on 'the general outline as seen from a good distance.' This is greeted by some of the papers as particularly side-splitting and eccentric. Looking at the unlovely streets of London, never one of the more beautiful cities of Europe, where each new building seems contrived to go one better in sheer *uglitude* (especially since builders of Tube stations have ventured into the Vitruvian arena), you can easily suppose that poor Miss Browne, with her views about 'general outlines seen from a good distance,' must have appeared hopelessly insane. The decision of the court is not likely to encourage any further public bequests of this kind. I have cut the British Museum and the National Gallery out of my own will already. And I understand why Mr. Mac-

Coll, with his passionate pleading for a living national architecture, for official recognition of past and present English art, is thought by many good people quite odd. How he managed to attract the notice of any but the Lunacy Commissioners I cannot conceive. Valued critic, admired artist, model keeper, I only hope he will attract no further attention.

Since it is clear that the law assists in blackening reputations even in the grave, I claim that other Miss Brownes who take advantage of life, and time by the forelock to put up monuments in the sufficiently hideous thoroughfares should be pronounced *non compos mentis.* The perpetrators of the erection in High Street, Kensington, hard by St. Mary Abbots, may serve as an example. Inconvenient, vulgar, inapposite, this should debar even the subscribers from obtaining probate for their wills. I invoke posthumous revenge, and claim that at least 500*l.* damages should be paid as compensation to the nearest hospital for the *indignant* blind, as my friend Mr. Vincent O'Sullivan calls them in one of his delightful stories.

(1906.)

NON ANGELI SED ANGLI.

I WISH that the Rokeby Velasquez now firmly secured for the British nation could have been allowed to remain in Bond Street for a short while; not to tantalise the foreign countries who so eagerly competed for its acquisition, nor to emphasise the patriotism of its former owners, but as a contrast to 'Some Examples of the Independent Art of To-day,' held at Messrs. Agnew's. Perhaps not as a contrast even, but as a complement. I do not mean to place all the examples on the same level with the 'Venus,' though with some I should have preferred to live; yet the juxtaposition would have asserted the tradition of the younger painters and the modernity of the older master. 'We are all going to—Agnew's, and Velasquez will be of the company,' or something like Gainsborough's dying words would have occurred sooner or later. I am persuaded that we look at the ancient pictures with frosted magnifying-

glasses, and stare at the younger men from the wrong end of the binoculars. It was ever thus; it always will be so. Most of us suspect our contemporaries or juniors. And they — *les jeunes féroces* — are impatient of their immediate predecessors. *Nos pères ont toujours tort.* Though grandpapa is sometimes quite picturesque; his waistcoat and old buttons suit us very well. 'Your Raphael is not even divine,' said Velasquez when he left Rome and that wonderful *p.p.c.* card on the Doria. 'Your Academicians are not even academic,' some of the younger painters and their champions are saying to-day.

I found, moreover, the epithet 'independent,' to qualify an entertaining and significant exhibition, misleading. For many of the items could only be so classified in the sense that they were independent of Messrs. Agnew and the Royal Academy. Mr. Tonks and Professor Brown are official instructors at the Slade School in London; Mr. C. J. Holmes is Keeper of the National Portrait Gallery. Mr. Gerard Chowne was a professor at Liverpool. Mr. Fry is now an official at New York; and the majority of the painters belonged to two

distinctive and *dependent* groups—the Glasgow School and the New English Art Club. Intense individualism is not incompatible with militant collectivism. The only independent artists, if you except Mr. Nicholson, were Mr. C. H. Shannon and Mr. Charles Ricketts, who have always stood apart, being neither for the Royal Academy nor its enemies; their choice is in their pictures.

I feel it difficult to write of painters for some of whom I acted showman so long at the Carfax Gallery. I confess that when I heard they were going to Bond Street my pangs were akin to those of the owner of a small country circus on learning that his troupe of performing dogs had been engaged by Mr. Imre Kiralfy or the Hippodrome. A quondam dealer in ultramontanes, I became an Othello of the trade. And in their grander quarters (I grieve to say) they looked better than ever, though I would have chosen another background, something less expensive and more severe. Yes, they all went through their hoops gracefully. With one exception, I never saw finer Wilson Steers; the 'Sunset' might well be hung beside the new Turners, when

the gulf between ancient and modern art would be almost imperceptible. The 'Aliens' of Mr. Rothenstein in the cosmopolitan society of a public picture gallery would hardly appear foreigners, because they belong to a country where the inhabitants are racy of every one else's soil. When time has given an added dignity (if that were possible) to this work, I can realise how our descendants will laugh at our lachrymose observations on the decadence of art. The background against which the stately Hebrew figures are silhouetted is in itself a liberal education for the aged and those who ask their friends what these modern fellows mean.

When the inhabitants of the unceltiferous portion of these islands employ the adjective *un-English* you may be sure there is something serious on the carpet. It is valedictory, expressive of sorrow and contempt rather than anger. All the other old favourites of vituperative must have missed fire before this almost sacred, disqualifying Podsnappianism is applied to the objectionable person, picture, book, behaviour, or movement. And when the epithet is brought into action, in nine cases

out of ten it is aimed at some characteristic essentially, often blatantly, Anglo-Saxon. Throughout the nineteenth century all exponents of art and literature not conforming to Fleet Street ideals were voted un-English; Byron, Shelley, Keats, Swinburne, the Pre-Raphaelites, and, in course of good time, those artists who formed the New English Art Club. There was some ground for suspicion of foreign intrigue. They regarded Mr. Whistler, an American, who flirted with French impressionism, as a pioneer. Some of their names suggest the magic Orient or the romantic scenery of the Rhine. But it is not extravagant to assert that if Mr. Rothenstein had chosen to be born in France or Germany, instead of in Bradford, his art would have come to us in another form. In his strength and his weakness he is more English than the English. Art may have cosmopolitan relations (it is usually a hybrid), but it must take on the features of the country and people where it grows; or it may change them, or change the vision of the people of its adoption. Yet Ruth must not look too foreign in the alien corn, or her values will get wrong.

When an English artist airs his foreign accent and his smattering of French pigment his work has no permanent significance. Even Professor Legros unconsciously assimilated British subjectivity: his Latin rein has been slackened; his experiments are often literary.

It is an error however to regard the exhibitions of the New English Art Club as a homogeneous movement, such as that of Barbizon and the Pre-Raphaelite—inspired by a single idea or similar group of ideas. The members have not even the cohesion of Glasgow or defunct Newlyn. The only thing they have in common, in common originally with Glasgow, was a distaste for the tenets and ideals of Burlington House. The serpent (or was it the animated rod?) of the Academy soon swallowed the sentimentalities of Newlyn, just as the International boa-constrictor made short work of Glasgow. And the forbidden fruit of an official Eden has tempted many members of the Club. Others have resigned from time to time, but with no ill result—to the Club. Now, the reason for this is that the members have no dependence on each other, except for the executive organiza-

tion of Mr. Francis Bate. It may be doubted if in their heart of hearts they admire each other's works. They are intense individualists (personal friends, maybe, in private life) artistically speaking, on terms of cutting acquaintance at the Slade.

The mannerism of Professor Legros is still, of course, a common denominator for the older men, and the younger artists evince a familiarity with drawing unusual in England, due to the admirable training of Professor Brown and Mr. Henry Tonks. The Spartan Mr. Tonks may not be able to make geniuses, but he has the faculty of turning out efficient workmen. Whether they become members of the Club or drift into the haven of Burlington House, at all events they *can* fly and wear their aureoles with propriety. A society, however, which contains such distinctive and assertive personalities as Mr. Wilson Steer, Mr. Henry Tonks, Mr. Augustus John, Mr. William Orpen, Mr. Von Glehn, Mr. MacColl, and Professor Holmes, cannot possess even such unity of purpose as inspired Mr. Holman Hunt and his associates of the 'fifties. The New English Art Club is

simply an admirably administered association whose members have rather less in common than is shared by the members of an ordinary political club. The exhibitions are for this reason intensely interesting. They cannot be waved aside like mobs, and no comprehensive epigram can do them even an injustice.

I never knew any painter worthy of the name who paid the smallest attention to what a critic says, even in conversation. He will retort; but he will not change his style or regulate his motives to suit a critic's palate. So may I now mention their faults? What painter is without fault? Their faults are shared by *nearly* all of them; their virtues are their own. I see among them an absence of any *desire* for beauty—for physical beauty. If the artists have fulfilled a mission in abolishing 'the sweetly pretty Christmas supplement kind of work,' I think they dwell too long on the trivial and the ignoble. They put a not very interesting domesticity into their frames. Rossetti, of course, wheeled about the marriage couch, but his was itself an interesting object of *virtu*. Modern art ceased to express the better aspirations and thoughts of the day

when modern artists refused to become the servants of the commune, but asserted themselves as a component part of an intellectual republic. That is why people only commission portraits, and prefer to buy old masters who anticipate those better aspirations. Burne-Jones, however, expressed in paint that longing to be out of the nineteenth century which was so widespread. Now we are well out of it, the rising generation does not esteem his works with the same enthusiasm as the elders. It reads Mr. Wells on the future, and looks into the convex mirror of Mr. Bernard Shaw; but it does not buy Dubedats to the extent that it ought to do. The members of the New English Art Club could, I think, preserve their æsthetic conscience and yet paint beautiful things and beautiful people. Mr. Steer has now given them a lead. I wonder what Mr. Winter's opinion would be? He is the best salesman in London.

Among dealers, the ancient firm of Messrs. P. & D. Colnaghi, of which Thackeray writes, is the *doyen*. That of Messrs. Agnew is the *douane*. Here it is that the official seal must be set before modern paintings can pass on-

wards to the Midlands and the middle classes. Well, I felicitate the august officials on removing a tariff of prejudice; I felicitate the young artists who, released from the bondage of the Egyptian Hall, can now enjoy the lighter air, the larger day, the pasturage and patronage of Palestine. I compliment the fearless collectors, such as Mr. C. K. Butler, Mr. Herbert Trench, Mr. Daniel, His Honour Judge Evans, the Leylands and the Leathearts of a latter day, for ignoring contemporary ridicule and anticipating the verdict, not of passing fashion but of posterity. As the servant spoke well of his master while wearing his clothes which were far too big for him, let me congratulate the Chrysostom of critics, the Origen who has scourged our heresies, Mr. D. S. MacColl; because the Greeks have entered Troy or the barbarians the senate-house. *Dissolve frigus ligna super foco large reponens,* and let us mix our metaphors. What was Mr. MacColl's Waterloo was a Canossa for Messrs. Agnew.

(1906.)

MR. HOLMAN HUNT AT THE LEICESTER GALLERIES.

AN enterprising American syndicate was once formed for manufacturing Stilton cheeses on a large scale; like the pirated Cheddars from similar sources, enjoyed by members of most London clubs. Various farms celebrated for their Stiltons were visited, sums of money being offered for old family recipes. The simple peasants of the district willingly parted with copies of their heirlooms, for a consideration, to the different American agents, who, filled with joy, repaired to their London offices in order to compare notes, and fully persuaded that England was a greener country than ever Constable painted it. What was their mortification on discovering that all the recipes were entirely different; they could not be reconciled even by machinery. So it is with Pre-Raphaelitism; every critic believes that he knows the great secret, and can always quote from one of the brotherhood something

in support of his view. At the beginning the brothers meekly accepted Ruskin's explanation of their existence; his, indeed, was a very convenient, though not entirely accurate, exposition of their collective view, if they can be said to have possessed one. How far Ruskin was out of sympathy with them, indiscreet memoirs have revealed. An artistic idea, or a group of ideas, must always be broken gently to the English people, because the acceptance of them necessitates the swallowing of words. When the golden ladders are let down from heaven by poets, artists, or critics even; or new spirits are hovering in the intellectual empyrean, the patriarch public snoring on its stone pillow wakes up; but he will not wrestle with the angel. He mistakes the ladders for scaffolding, or some temporary embarrassment in the street traffic; he orders their instant removal; he writes angry letters to the papers and invokes the police. After some time Ruskin's definition of Pre-Raphaelitism was generally accepted, and then the death of Rossetti produced other recipes for the Stilton cheese, Mr. Hall Caine being among the grocers. Whatever the correct definition may

be, ungracious and ungrateful though it is to praise the dead at the expense of the living, it has to be recognised that among the remarkable group of painters in which even the minor men were little masters, the greatest artist of them all was Dante Gabriel Rossetti. 'By critic I mean finding fault,' says Sir William Richmond; so let us follow his advice, and avoid technical discussion along with the popular jargon of art criticism. 'After staying two or three hours in the always-delightful Leicester Galleries, let us walk home and think a little of what we have seen.' For the essence of beauty there is nothing of Mr. Holman Hunt's to compare with Rossetti's 'Beloved' or the 'Blue Bower;' and you could name twenty of the poet's water-colours which, for design, invention, devious symbolism, and religious impulse, surpass the finest of Mr. Hunt's most elaborate works. Even in the painter's own special field—the symbolised illustration of Holy Writ—he is overwhelmed by Millais with the superb 'Carpenter's Shop.' In Millais, it was well said by Mr. Charles Whibley, 'we were cheated out of a Rubens.' Millais

was the strong man, the great oil-painter of the group, as Rossetti was the supreme artist. In Mr. Holman Hunt we lost another Archdeacon Farrar. Then, in the sublimation of uglitude, Madox-Brown, step-father of the Pre-Raphaelites (my information is derived from a P.R.B. aunt), was an infinitely greater conjurer. Look at the radiant painting of 'Washing of the Feet' in the Tate Gallery; is there anything to equal that masterpiece from the brush of Mr. Holman Hunt? The 'Hireling Shepherd' comes nearest, but the preacher, following his own sheep, has strayed into alien corn, and on cliffs from which is ebbing a tide of nonconformist conscience. Like his own hireling shepherd, too, he has mistaken a phenomenon of nature for a sermon.

One of the great little pictures, 'Claudio and Isabella,' proves, however, that *once* he determined to be a painter. In the 'Lady of Shalott' he showed himself a designer with unusual powers akin to those of William Blake. Still, examined at a distance or close at hand, among his canvases do we find a single piece of decoration or a picture in the

ordinary sense of the word? My definition of a religious picture is a painted object in two dimensions destined or suitable for the decoration of an altar or other site in a church, or room devoted to religious purposes; if it fails to satisfy the required conditions, it fails as a work of art. Where is the work of this so-called religious painter which would satisfy the not exacting conditions of a nonconformist or Anglican place of worship? You are not surprised to learn that Keble College mistook the 'Light of the World' for a patent fuel, or that the background of the 'Innocents' was painted in 'the Philistine plain.' Who could live even in cold weather with the 'Miracle of the Sacred Fire?' Give me rather the 'Derby Day' of Mr. Frith—admirable and underrated master. What are they if we cannot place them in the category of pictures? They are pietistic ejaculations—tickled-up maxims in pigment of extraordinary durability—counsels of perfection in colour and conduct. Of all the Pre-Raphaelites, Mr. Hunt will remain the most popular. He is artistically the scapegoat of that great movement which gave a new impulse

to English art, a scapegoat sent out to wander by the dead seas of popularity. I once knew a learned German who regretted that none of his countrymen could paint 'Alpine scenery' as Mr. Hunt has done in the 'Scapegoat'! Yes, he has a message for every one, for my German friend, for Sir William Richmond, and myself. He is a missing link between art and popularity. He symbolises the evangelical attitude of those who would go to German Reed's and the Egyptian Hall, but would not attend a theatre. After all, it was a gracious attitude, because it is that of mothers who aged more beautifully, I think, than the ladies of a later generation which admired Whistler or Burne-Jones and regularly attended the Lyceum. When modern art, the brilliant art of the 'sixties, was strictly excluded from English homes except in black and white magazines, engravings from the 'Finding of Christ in the Temple' and the 'Light of the World' were allowed to grace the parlour along with 'Bolton Abbey,' the 'Stag at Bay,' and 'Blücher meeting Wellington.' You see them now only in Pimlico and St. John's Wood. A friend of mine said

he could never look at the picture of 'Blücher meeting Wellington' without blushing. . . . . Like a good knight and true, Sir William Richmond, another Bedivere, has brandished Excalibur in the form of a catalogue for Mr. Hunt's pictures. He offers the jewels for our inspection; they make a brave show; they are genuine; they are intrinsic, but you remember others of finer water, Bronzino-like portraits of Mr. Andrew Lang and Bismarck and many others. Now, you should never recollect anything during the enjoyment of a complete work of art.

Every one knows the view from Richmond, I should say *of* Richmond; it is almost my own. . . . . Far off Sir Bedivere sees Lyonesse submerged; Camelot-at-Sea has capitulated after a second siege to stronger forces. The new Moonet is high in the heaven and a dim Turner-like haze has begun to obscure the landscape and soften the outlines. Under cover of the mist the hosts of Mordred Mac-Coll, *en-Taté* with victory, are hunting the steer in the New English Forest. Far off the enchanter Burne-Jones is sleeping quietly in Broceliande (I cannot bear to call it Rotting-

dean). Hark, the hunt, (not the Holman Hunt) is up in Caledon (Glasgow); they have started the shy wilson steer: they have wound the hornel; the lords of the International, who love not Mordred overmuch, are galloping nearer and nearer. Sir Bedivere can see their insolent penells waving black and white flags: and the game-keepers and beaters (critics) chant in low vulgar tones:

> When we came out of Glasgow town
> There was really nothing at all to see
> Except Legros and Professor Brown,
> But *now* there is Guthrie and Lavery.

Undaunted Sir Bedivere drags his burden to a hermitage near Coniston; but he finds it ruined; he bars the door in order to administer refreshment to the wounded Pre-Raphaelite; there is a knocking at the wicket-gate; is it the younger generation? No, he can hear the tread of the royal sargent-at-arms; his spurs and sword are clanking on the pavement. Sir Bedivere feels his palette parched; his tongue cleaves to the roof of St. Paul's; but he is undaunted. 'We are surely betrayed if that is really Sargent,' he says. Through the broken tracery of the Italian Gothic window

a breeze or draught comes softly and fans his strong academic arms; he feels a twinge. Some Merlin told him he would suffer from ricketts with shannon complications. Seizing Excalibur, he opens the door cautiously. 'Draw, caitiffs,' he cries; 'draw.' 'Perhaps they cannot draw; perhaps they are impressionists,' said a raven on the hill; and he flew away.

(1906.)

To Sir William Blake Richmond, R.A., K.C.B.

THE ECLECTIC AT LARGE.

IN *The Education of an Artist*, Mr. Lewis Hind invented a new kind of art criticism—a pleasing blend of the Morelli narrative (minus the scientific method) and *Mr. Sponge's Sporting Tour*. He contrives a young man, ignorant like the Russian, Lermoliev, who receives certain artistic impressions, faithfully recorded by Mr. Hind and visualised for the reader in a series of engaging half-tone illustrations. The hero's name is itself suggestive—Claude Williamson Shaw. By the end of the book he is nearly as learned as Mr. Claude Phillips: he might edit a series of art-books with all the skill of Dr. Williamson, and his power of racy criticism rivals that of Mr. George Bernard Shaw. You can hardly escape the belief that these three immortals came from the north and south, gathered as unto strife, breathed upon his mouth and filled his body —with ideas: Mr. Hind supplying the life.

But this is not so: the ideas are all Mr. Hind's and the godfathers only supplied the name. What a name it is to be sure! It recalls one of Ibsen's plays: 'Claude Williamson Shaw was a miner's son—a Cornish miner's son, as you know; or perhaps you didn't know. He was always wanting *plein-air*.' Some one ought to say that in the book, but I must say it instead. At all events, Mr. Hind nearly always refers to him by his three names, and every one must think of him in the same way, otherwise side issues will intrude themselves—thoughts of other things and people. 'O Captain Shaw, type of true love kept under,' is not inapposite, because Claude Williamson Shaw fell in love with a lady who in a tantalising manner became a religious in one of the strictest Orders, the rules of which were duly set forth in old three-volume novels; that is the only conventional incident in the book. C. W. S., although he trains for painting, is admitted by Mr. Hind to be quite a bad artist. Apart, therefore, from the admirable criticism which is the main feature of the book, it shows great courage on the part of the inventor, great sacrifice, to admit

that C. W. S. *was* a failure as an artist. Bad artists, however, are always nice people. I do not say that the reverse is true; indeed, I know many good and even great artists who are charming; but I never met a thoroughly inferior painter (without any promise of either a future or a past) who was not irresistible socially. This accounts for some of the elections at the Royal Academy, I believe, and for the pictures on the walls of your friends whose taste you know to be impeccable. There is more hearty recognition of bad art in England than the Tate Gallery gives us any idea of.

I know that the Chantrey Trustees were deprived of the only possible excuse for their purchases by the finding of Lord Lytton's Commission; but I, for one, shall always think of them as kindly men with a fellow-feeling for incompetence, who would have bought a work by Claude Williamson Shaw if the opportunity presented itself. I have sometimes tried to imagine what the pictures of *invented* artists in fiction or drama were really like—I fear they were all dreadful performances. I used to imagine that Oswald

Avling was a sort of Segantini, but something he says in the play convinced me that he was merely another Verboekhoven. Then Thackeray's Ridley must have been a terrible Philistine—a sort of Sir John Gilbert. Poor Basil Hallward's death was no great loss to art, I surmise: his portrait of 'Dorian Grey, Esq.', from all accounts, resembled the miraculous picture exhibited in Bond Street a short while ago. I am not surprised that its owner, whose taste improved, I suspect, with advancing years, destroyed it in the ordinary course after reading something by Mr. D. S. MacColl. It is distinctly stated that Dorian read the *Saturday Review!* Frenhofer, Hippolite Schimier, and Leon de Lora were probably chocolate-box painters of the regular second-empire type. Theobald, we know from Mr. Henry James, was a man of ideas who could not carry out his intentions. It must have been an exquisite memory of Theobald's failures which made Pater, when he wished to contrive an imaginary artistic personality, take Watteau as being some one in whose achievements you can believe. No literary artist can persuade us into admiring

pictures which never existed; though an artist can reconstruct from literature a picture which has perished we know, from the 'Calumny of Apelles' by Botticelli. It was, therefore, wise to make Claude Williamson Shaw a failure as a painter. In accordance with my rule he was an excellent fellow, nearly as charming as his author, and better company in a picture-gallery it would be difficult to find—and you cannot visit picture-galleries with every friend: you require a sympathetic personality. It is the Claude—the Claude Phillips in him which I like best: the Dr. Williamson I rather suspect. I mean that when he was at Messrs. Chepstow, the publishers, he must have mugged up some of the real Dr. Williamson's art publications. Whether in the Louvre, or National Gallery, or in Italian towns, he always goes for the right thing; sometimes you wish he would make a mistake. Bad artists, of course, are often excellent judges of old pictures and make excellent dealers, and I am not denying the instinct of C. W. S.; but I cannot think it all came so naturally as Mr. Hind would indicate.

The reason why Claude Williamson Shaw discovered 'that he would not find a true expression of his temperament' in painting readers of this ingenious book will discover for themselves. Assuming that he had any innate talent, I do not think he went about the right way to cultivate it. His friend Lund gave him the very worst advice; though we are the gainers. It is quite unnecessary to go out of England and gaze at a lot of pictures of entirely different schools in order to become a painter. Gainsborough and our great Norwich artists evolved themselves without any foreign study. There was no National Gallery in their days. A second-rate Wynants and a doubtful Hobbema seem to have been enough to give them hints. It would be tedious to mention other examples. The fortunate meeting of Zuccarelli and Wilson at Venice is the only instance I know in which foreign travel benefited any English landscape painter. Foreign travel is all very well when the artist has grown up. Paris has been the tomb of many English art students. M. Bordeaux, who gave Mr. Hind's hero tips in the atelier, seems to have been as 'convincing' as

the famous barrel of the same name. Far better will the English student be under Mr. Tonks at the Slade; or even at the Royal Academy, where, owing to the doctrine of contraries, out of sheer rebellion he may become an artist. In Paris you learn perfect carpentry, but not art, unless you are a born artist; but in that case you will be one in spite of Paris, not because of it. But if C. W. Shaw had been a real painter he would have seen at Venice certain Tiepolos which seem to have escaped him, and in other parts of Italy certain Caravaggios. Yes, and Correggios and Guido Renis, too hastily passed by. He was doomed to be a connoisseur.

(1906.)

EGO ET MAX MEUS.

'HOW very delightful Max's drawings are. For all their mad perspective and crude colour, they have, indeed, the sentiment of style, and they reveal with rarer delicacy than does any other record the spirit of Lloyd-George's day.' This sentence is not quite original: it is adapted from an eminent author because the words sum up so completely the inexpressible satisfaction following an inspection of Mr. Beerbohm's caricatures. To-day essentially belongs to the Minister who once presided at the Board of Trade. Several attempts indeed have been made to describe the literature, art and drama of the present as 'Edwardian,' from a very proper and loyal spirit, to which I should be the last to object. We were even promised a few years ago a new style of furniture to inaugurate the reign—something to supplant that Louis Dix-neuvième *décor* which is merely a com-

promise with the past. But somehow the whole thing has fallen through; in this democratic æon the adjective 'Edwardian' trips on the tongue; our real dramatists are all Socialists or Radicals; our poets and writers Anarchists. Our artists are the only conservatives of intellect. Our foreign policy alone can be called 'Edwardian,' so personal is it to the King. Everything else is a compromise; so our time must therefore be known—at least ten years of it—as the Lloyd-Georgian period. I can imagine collectors of the future struggling for an *alleged* genuine work of art belonging to this brief renaissance, and the disappointment of the dealer on finding that it dated a year before the Budget, thereby reducing its value by some thousands.

Just as we go to Kneller and Lely for speaking portraits of the men who made their age, so I believe our descendants will turn to Max for listening likenesses of the present generation. Of all modern artists, he alone follows Hamlet's advice. If the mirror is a convex one, that is merely the accident of genius, and reflects the malady of the cen-

tury. Other artists have too much eye on the Uffizi and the National Gallery (the more modest of them only painting up to the Tate). In Max we have one who never harks forward to the future, and is therefore more characteristic, more Lloyd-Georgian than any of his peers. Set for one moment beside some Rubens' goddess a portrait by Mr. Sargent, and how would she be troubled by its beauty? Not in the slightest degree; because they are both similar but differing expressions of the same genius of painting. The centuries which separate them are historical conventions; and in Art, history does not count; æsthetically, time is of no consequence. But in the more objective art of caricature, history is of some import, and (as Mr. Beerbohm himself admitted about photographs) the man limned is of paramount importance. Actual resemblance, truthfulness of presentation, criticism of the model become legitimate subjects for consideration. Generally speaking, artists long since wisely resigned all attempts at catching a likeness, leaving to photography an inglorious victory. Mr. Beerbohm, realising this fact, seized caricature

as a substitute—the consolation, it may be, for a lost or neglected talent. It is as though Watts (painter of the soul's prism, if ever there was one) had pushed away Ward and Downey from the camera, to insert a subtler lens, a more sensitive negative.

* * * * *

If, reader, you have ever been to a West-end picture shop, you will have suffered some annoyance on looking too attentively at any item in the exhibition, by the approach of an officious attendant, who presses you to purchase it. He begins by flattery; he felicitates you on your choice of the *best* picture in the room—the one that has been 'universally admired by critics and collectors.'

The fact of its not being sold is due (he naïvely confesses) to its rather high price; several offers have been submitted, and if not sold at the catalogued amount the artist has promised to consider them; but it is very unlikely that the drawing will remain long without a red ticket, '*as people come back to town to-morrow.*' There is the stab, the stab in the back while you were drinking honey; the tragedy of

Corfe Castle repeated. *People* with a capital *P* in picture-dealing circles does not mean what they call the *Hoypolloy;* it means the great ones of the earth, the *monde*, the Capulets and Montagues with wealth or rank. You have been measured by the revolting attendant. He does not count you with them, or you would not be in town to-day; something has escaped you in the *Morning Post*, some function to which you were not invited, or of which you knew nothing. If you happen to be a Capulet you feel mildly amused, and in order to correct the wrong impression and let the underling know your name and address you purchase the drawing; for the greatest have their weak side. But, if not, and you have simply risen from the 'purple of commerce,' you are determined not to lag behind stuck-up Society; you will revenge yourself for the thousand injuries of Fortunatus; you will deprive him of his prerogative to buy the *best.* The purchase is concluded. You go home with your nerves slightly shaken from the gloved contest—you go home to face your wife and children, wearing a look of wistful inquiry on their irregular upturned faces, as

when snow lies upon the ground, they scent Christmas, and you look up with surprise at the whiteness of the ceiling. Though in private life a contributor to the press, in public I used to be one of those importunate salesmen.

It was my duty, my pleasurable duty, so to act for Mr. Beerbohm's caricatures when exhibited at a fashionable West-end gallery where among the visitors I recognised many of his models. I observe that when Mr. Beerbohm is a friend of his victim he is generally at his best; that he is always excellent and often superb if he is in sympathy with the personality of that victim, however brutally he may render it. His failures are due to lack of sympathy, and they are often, oddly enough, the mildest as caricatures. Fortunately, Mr. Beerbohm selects chiefly celebrities who are either personal friends or those for whom he must have great admiration and sympathy. By a divine palmistry he estimates them with exquisite perception. I noted that those who were annoyed with their own caricature either did not know Mr. Beerbohm or disliked his incomparable writings; and, curiously enough,

he misses the likeness in people he either does not know personally or whom you suspect he dislikes. I am glad now of the opportunity of being sincere, because it was part of my function as salesman to agree with what every one said, whether in praise or in blame.

And let me reproduce a conversation with one of the visitors. It is illustrative:—

[SCENE: *The Carfax Gallery; rather empty; early morning. Caricatures by Max Beerbohm; entrance one shilling. Enter* DISTINGUISHED CLIENT, *takes catalogue, but does not consult it. No celebrity ever consults a catalogue in a modern picture-gallery. This does not apply to ladies, however distinguished, who conscientiously begin at number one and read out from the catalogue the title of each picture.* SHOPMAN *in attendance.*]

D. C. (*glancing round*). Yes; *how* very clever they are.

SHOPMAN. Yes; they are very amusing.

D. C. I suppose you have had heaps of People. What a pity Max cannot draw!

SHOPMAN. Yes; it *is* a great pity.

D. C. (*examines drawing; after a pause*). But he *can* draw. Look at that one of Althorp.

SHOPMAN (*trying to look intelligent*): Yes; that certainly is well drawn.

D. C. (*pointing to photograph of Paris inserted in Mr. Claude Lowther's caricature*). And how extraordinary that is. It is like one of Muirhead Bone's street scenes. He does street scenes, doesn't he?

SHOPMAN. Yes; or one of Mr. Joseph Pennell's.

D. C. (*after a pause*). What a pity he never gets the likeness. That's very bad of Arthur Balfour.

SHOPMAN. Yes; it is a great pity. No; that's not at all a good one of Mr. Balfour.

D. C. (*pointing to Mr. Shaw's photograph inserted in caricature*). But he *has* got the likeness there. By Jove! it's nearly as good as a photograph.

SHOPMAN (*examining photograph as if he had never seen it; enthusiastically*). It's *almost* as good as a photograph.

D. C. (*pointing with umbrella to Lord Weardale*). Of course, that's Rosebery?

SHOPMAN (*nervously*): Y-e-s. (*Brightly changing subject.*) What do you think of Mr. Sargent's?

D. C. (*now worked up*). Oh! that's very good. Yes; that's the best of all. I see it's sold. I should have bought that one if it hadn't been sold. I wish Max would do a caricature of—— (*describes a possible caricature*). Tell him I suggested it; he knows me quite well (*glancing round*). He really is tremendous. Are they going to be published?

SHOPMAN. Yes; by Methuen & Co. (*Hastily going over to new-comer.*) Yes, madam, that is Mr. Arthur Balfour; it's considered the *best* caricature in the exhibition —the likeness is so particularly striking; and as a pure piece of draughtsmanship it is certainly the finest drawing in the room. No; that's not so good of Lord Althorp, though it *was* the first to sell. (*Turning to another client.*) Yes, sir; he is Mr. Beerbohm Tree's half-brother.

(1907.)

To MRS. BEERBOHM.

THE ETHICS OF REVIEWING.

THE 'Acropolis,' a review of literature, science, art, politics, society, and the drama, is, as every one knows, our leading literary weekly. Its original promoters decided on its rather eccentric title with a symbolism now outmoded. The 'Acropolis' was to be impregnable to outside contributors, and the editor was always to be invisible. All the vile and secret arts of réclame and puffery were to find no place in its immaculate pages. One afternoon some time ago a number of gentlemen, more or less responsible for the production of the 'Acropolis,' were seated round the fire in the smoking-room of a certain club. For the last hour they had been discussing with some warmth the merits of signed or unsigned articles and the reviewing of books. A tall, good-looking man, who pretended to be unpopular, was advocating the anonymous. 'There is something so cowardly about a signed article,' he was saying. 'It is nearly

as bad as insulting a man in public, when there is no redress except to call for the police. And that is ridiculous. If I am slated by an anonymous writer, it is always in my power to pay no attention, whereas if the slate is signed, I am obliged to take notice of some kind. I must either deny the statements, often at a great sacrifice of truth, or if I assault the writer there is always the risk of his being physically stronger than I am. No; anonymous attack is the only weapon for gentlemen.'

'To leave for a moment the subject of anonymity,' said an eminent novelist, 'I think the great curse of all criticism is that of slating any book at all. Think of the unfortunate young man or woman first entering the paths of literature, and the great pain it causes them. You should encourage them, and not damp their enthusiasm.'

'My dear fellow,' said North, 'I encourage no one, and writers should never have any feelings at all. They can't have any, or they would not bore the public by writing.'

The discussion was getting heated when the editor, Rivers, interfered.

'My dear North,' he began, addressing the first speaker, 'your eloquent advocacy of the anonymous reminds me of a curious incident that occurred many years ago when I was assistant-editor of the "Acropolis." The facts were never known to the public, and my old chief, Curtis, met with much misplaced abuse in consequence. There were reasons for which he could never break silence; but it happened so long ago that I cannot be betraying any confidence. All of you have heard of, and some of you have seen, Quentin Burrage, whose articles practically made the "Acropolis" what it now is. His opinion on all subjects was looked forward to by the public each week. Young poetasters would tremble when their time should come to be pulverised by the scathing epigrams which fell from his anonymous pen. Essayists, novelists, statesmen were pale for weeks until a review appeared that would make or mar their fame. In the various literary coteries of London no one knew that Quentin Burrage was the slater who thrilled, irritated, or amused them, though he was of course recognised as an occasional contributor. The secret was well kept. He

was practically critical censor of London for ten years. A whole school of novelists ceased to exist after three of his notices in the "Acropolis." The names of painters famous before his time you will not find in the largest dictionaries now. Four journalists committed suicide after he had burlesqued their syntax, and two statesmen resigned office owing to his masterly examination of their policy. We were all much shocked when a popular actor set fire to his theatre on a first night because Curtis and his dramatic critic refused to take champagne and chicken between the acts. This may give you some idea of Burrage's power in London for a decade of the last century.

'One day a curious change came over him. It was Monday when he and I were in the office receiving our instructions. Curtis, after going over some books, handed to Quentin a vellum-covered volume of poems, saying with a grim smile: "There are some more laurels for you to hash."

'An expression of pain spread over Quintin's serene features.

'"I'll see what I can do," he said wearily. But his curious manner struck both Curtis and

myself. The book was a collection of very indifferent verse which already enjoyed a wide popularity. I cannot tell you the title, for that is a secret not my own. It was early work of one of our most esteemed poets who for some time was regarded by *his friends* as the natural successor to Mr. Alfred Austin. The "Acropolis" had not spoken. We were sometimes behindhand in our reviews. The public waited to learn if the new poet was really worth anything. You may imagine the general surprise when a week afterwards there appeared a flamingly favourable review of the poems. It made a perfect sensation and was quoted largely. The public became quite conceited with its foresight. The reputation of the poet was assured. "Snarley-ow must be dead," some one remarked in my hearing at the club, and members tried to pump me. One day a telegram came from Curtis asking me to go down to his house at once. A request from him was a command. I found him in a state of some excitement, his manner a little artificial. "My dear Rivers, I suppose you think me mad. The geese have got into the Capitol at last." Without correcting his

classical allusion, I said: "Where is Burrage?" "He is coming here presently. Of course, I glanced at the thing in proof, and thought it a splendid joke, but reading it this morning, I have come to the conclusion that something is wrong with Burrage. You remember his agitated manner the other day?" I was about to reply, when Burrage was announced. His haggard and pale appearance startled both of us. "My dear Burrage, what *is* the matter with you?' we exclaimed simultaneously. He gave a sickly nervous smile. "Of course you have sent to ask me about that review. Well, I have changed my opinions. I have altered. I think we should praise everything or ignore everything. To slate a book, good or bad, is taking the bread out of a fellow's mouth. I have been the chief sinner in this way, and I am going to be the first reformer." "Not in my paper," said Curtis angrily.

'Then we all fell to discussing that old question with all the warmth that North and the rest of you were doing just now. We lost our tempers and Curtis ended the matter by saying: "I tell you what it is, Burrage, if you

ever bring out a book yourself I'll send it to you to review. You can praise it as much as you like. But don't let this occur again, with any one else's work." Burrage turned quite white, I thought, and Curtis, noticing the effect of his words, went up and taking him by the hand, added more kindly, "My poor Burrage, are you quite well? I never saw you in so morbid a state before. All this is mere sentimentality—so different from your usual manly spirit. Go away for a change, to Brighton or Eastbourne, and you must come back with that wholesome contempt for your contemporaries that characterises most of your writings. I'll look over the matter this time, and we'll say no more about it." And here Curtis was so overcome that he dashed a tear from his eye. A few hours later I saw Burrage off to the sea. He was very strange in his manner. "I'll never be quite the same again. If I only dared to tell you," he said. And the train rolled out of the station.

'Some weeks later I was again in the editorial room and Curtis showed me a curiously bound book, printed on hand-made paper, entitled *Prejudices*. I had already

seen it. "That book," Curtis remarked, "ought to have been noticed long ago. I was keeping it for Burrage when he gets better. Shall I send it to him?"

'*Prejudices* for some weeks had been the talk of London. It was a series of very ineffectual essays on different subjects. Sight, Colour, Sound, Art, Letters, and Religion were all dealt with in that highly glowing and original manner now termed *Style*. It was delightfully unwholesome and extraordinarily silly. Young persons had already begun to get foolish over it, and leaving the more stimulating pages of Mr. Pater they hailed the work as an earnest of the English Renaissance. Instead of stroking *Marius the Epicurean* they fondled a copy of *Prejudices*. I prophesied that Burrage would vindicate himself over it and that the public would hear very little of *Prejudices* in a year's time. The book was sent; and the first part of my prophecy was fulfilled, Burrage spared neither the author nor his admirers. The pedantry, the affected style, the cheap hedonism were all pitilessly exposed. London rocked with laughter. Some of the admirers, with the

generosity of youth, nobly came to the rescue. They made a paper war and talked of "The cruelty and cowardice of the attack," "The stab in the dark," "Journalistic marauding," "Disappointed author turned critic." The slate was one that I am bound to say was *killing* in both senses of the word. A book less worthless could never have lived under it. It was one of those decisive reviews of all ages. *Prejudices* was withdrawn by the publisher fearful of damaging his prestige. Yet it was never looked on as a rarity, and fell at book auctions for a shilling, for some time after, amidst general tittering. The daily papers meanwhile devoted columns to the discussion. I telegraphed to Burrage in cipher and congratulated him, knowing that secrets leak out sometimes through the post office. I was surprised to get no reply for some weeks, but Curtis said he was lying low while the excitement lasted. One day I got a letter simply saying, "For God's sake come. I am very ill." I went at once. How shall I describe to you the pitiful condition I found him in? The doctor told me he was suffering from incipient tuberculosis due to cerebral excitement and

mental trouble. When I went in to see him he was lying in bed, pale and emaciated as a corpse, surrounded by friends and relations. He asked every one to go out of the room; he had something of importance to say to me. I then learned what you have divined already. The anonymous author of *Prejudices* was no other than Quentin Burrage himself. Or rather not himself, but the other self of which neither I nor Curtis knew anything. He had been living a double existence. As a writer of trashy essays and verse, an incomplete sentimentalist surrounded by an admiring band of young ladies and gentlemen, he was not recognised as the able critic and the anonymous slater of the "Acropolis."

'When he first received his own book for review he recalled the words of Curtis. He must be honest, impartial, and just. No one knew better the faults of *Prejudices*. As he began to write, the old spirit of the slater came over him. His better self conquered. He forgot for the moment that he was the author. He hardly realised the sting of his own sarcasms even when he saw them in proof.

It was not until it appeared, and the papers were full of the controversy, that the *cruelty* and *unfairness* of the attack dawned on him. I was much shocked at the confession, and the extraordinary duplicity of Burrage, who had been living a lie for the last ten years. His denunciation of poor Curtis pained me. I would have upbraided him, but his tortured face and hacking cough made me relent. I need not prolong the painful story. Burrage never recovered. He sank into galloping consumption, only aggravated by a broken heart. I saw him on his deathbed at Rome. He was attended by Strange, and died in his arms. His last words to me were, "Rivers, tell Curtis I forgive him."

'We buried in the Protestant cemetery near Keats and Shelley one whose name was written in hot water. His sad death provoked a good deal of comment, as you may suppose. Strange has often promised to write his life. But he could never get through *Prejudices*, and I pointed out to him that you can hardly write an author's life without reading one of his works, even though he did die in your arms. That is the worst of literary

martyrs with a few brilliant exceptions: their works are generally dull.'

'Is that all?' asked North.

'That is all, and I hope you understand the moral.'

'Perfectly; but your reminiscences have too much construction, my dear Rivers.'

'The story is perfectly true for all that,' remarked the Editor, drily.

A LITTLE DOCTORED FAUST.

A Prologue.

'The version of *Faust* which Mr. Stephen Phillips is contemplating will, it is interesting to learn from the author, be a "compact drama," of which the spectacular embellishment will form no part. In Mr. Phillips's view the story is in itself so strong and so rich in all the elements that make for dramatic effectiveness that to treat the subject as one for elaborate scenic display would be to diminish the direct appeal of a great tragedy. "First let me say," said Mr. Stephen Phillips, "how gladly I approach a task which will bring me again into association with Mr. George Alexander, whose admirable treatment of *Paolo and Francesca* you will no doubt remember. In the version of *Faust* which I am going to prepare there will be nothing spectacular, nothing to overshadow or intrude upon an immortal theme. As to how I shall treat the story, and as to the form in which it will be written, I am not yet sure—it may be a play in blank verse, or in prose with lyrics . . . . ." Mr. Phillips added that he had also in view a play on the subject of *Harold*.'—*The Tribune.*

Scene: The British Museum.

Sidney Colvin. Ah! my dear Stephen,
when they told me Phillips
Was waiting in my study, I imagined

That it was Claude, whom I have been expecting.
I have arranged that you shall have this room
All to yourself and friends. Now I must leave you.
I have to go and speak to Campbell Dodgson
About some prints we've recently acquired.

STEPHEN PHILLIPS. How can I ever thank you? Love to Binyon!

[COLVIN *goes out.*

Enter MR. GEORGE ALEXANDER, GOETHE, MARLOWE, GOUNOD.

ALEXANDER (*from force of habit*). I always told you he was reasonable.

GOETHE. Well, I consent. Mein Gott! how colossal
You English are! 'Tis nigh impossible
For poets to refuse you anything,
And German thought beneath some English shade—
Unter den Linden, as we say at home—
Sounds really quite as well on British soil.
Our good friend Marlowe hardly seems so pleased.

MARLOWE. Oh, Goethe! cease these frivolous remarks.
Think you that I, who knew Elizabeth,
And tasted all the joys of literature
And played the dawn to Shakespeare's larger day,
And heralded a mighty line of verse
With half-a-dozen mighty lines my own,
Am feeling well?

GOUNOD (*brightening*). Ah! Monsieur Wells,
Auteur d'une histoire fine et romanesque
Traduit par Davray; il a des idées
C'est une chose rare là-bas . . . .

STEPHEN PHILLIPS. He does not speak of Huysmans; 'tis myself.
I thank you, gentlemen, with all my heart;
I thank you, gentlemen, with all my soul;
I thank you, sirs, with all my soul and strength.
So for your leave much thanks. You know my weakness:
I love to be at peace with all the past.
The present and the future I can manage;
The stirrup of posterity may dangle
Against the heaving flanks of Pegasus.

I feel my spurs against the saucy mare
And Alexander turned Bucephalus.

MARLOWE. Neigh ! Neigh ! though you have told us what you are,
And we have witnessed Nero several times,
You do not tell us of this wretched Faustus,
Who must be damned in any case, I fear.

S. P. Of course, I treat you as material
On which to work ; but then I simplify
And purify the story for our stage.
The English stage is nothing if not pure.
For instance, we will not allow *Salomé*.
So in Act II. of *Faust* I represent
The marriage feast of beauteous Margaret ;
Act I. I get from Goethe, III. from Marlowe,
And Gounod's music fills the gaps in mine.
Margaret, of course, will never come to grief.
She only gets a separation order.
By the advice of Plowden magistrate,
She undertakes to wean Euphorion,
Who in his bounding habit symbolises
The future glories of the English empire.
As the production must not cost too much,
Harker, Hawes Craven, Hann are relegated
To a back place. It is a compact drama,
Of which spectacular embellishment

Will form no part. The story is so strong,
So rich in all the elements that make
A drama suitable for Alexander,
That scenery, if necessary to Tree,
Shall not intrude on this immortal theme.

GOETHE. Pyramidal! My friend, but you are splendid.
Now, have you shown the manuscript to Colvin?

MARLOWE. He is a scholar, and a ripe and good one,
And far too tolerant of modern poets.

ALEXANDER. One of your lines strike my familiar spirit.
Surely, that does not come from Stephen Phillips.

MARLOWE. No matter; I may quote from whom I will.
Shakespeare himself was not immaculate,
And borrowed freely from a barren past.

GOETHE. What thinks Herr Sidney Colvin of your work?

S. P. That he will tell you when he sees it played.

Act I.

Scene: Faust's Studio.

Servant. Well, if you have no further use
for me,
I will go make our preparation.
Faust. If anybody calls, say I am out;
I must have time to see how I will act.
As to the form in which I shall be written,
I must decide whether in prose or verse.
My thoughts I'll bend. Give me at once the
Times:
Walkley I always find inspiriting—
And really I learn much about the drama
(Even the German drama) from his pen,
More curious than that of Paracelsus.
(*Reads*) 'Sic vos non vobis, Bernard Shaw
might say,
Dieu et mon droit. Ich dien. Et taceat
Femina in ecclesia. Ellen Terry,
La plus belle femme de toutes les femmes
Du monde.' Archer, I have observed,
Writes no more for the World, but for himself.
Then I forgot; he's writing for the *Leader*,
That highly independent Liberal paper.
[Faust *muses. Bell heard.*

The Elixir of Life, is it a play
Which runs a thousand nights? Is it a dream
Precipitated into some alembic
Or glass retort by Ex-ray Lankester?

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT. A gentleman has called.

FAUST. Say I am out.

SERVANT. He will take no denial.

FAUST. Show him in.

Most probably 'tis Herbert Beerbohm Tree,
Who long has planned a play of Doctor Faustus.

Enter MEPHISTOPHELES.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Ah! my dear Doctor, here we are again!

Micawber-like, I never will desert you.
How do you feel? Your house I see myself
In perfect order. Ah! how much has past
Since those Lyceum days when you and I
Climbed up the Brocken on Walpurgis night.
That times have changed I realise myself;
No longer through the chimney I descend;
I enter like a super from the side.
Widowers' Houses dramas have become;
Morals and sentiment and Clement Scott

No more seem adjuncts of the English stage.

FAUST. Oh, Mephistopheles, you come in time

To save the English drama from a deadlock!

Like Mahmud's coffin hung 'twixt Heaven and Earth,

It falters up to verse and down to prose.

Tell us, then, how to act, how consummate

The aspirations of our Stephen Phillips!

MEPHISTO. Ah, Alexander Faustus! young as ever,

Still unabashed by Paolo and Francesca,

You long for plays with literary motives,

Plots oft attempted both in prose and rhyme.

FAUST. As ever, you are timid and old-fashioned.

MEPHISTO. Hark you! One thing I know above all others,

The English drama of the century past.

Though English critics have consigned to me

The plays of Ibsen, Maeterlinck, and Shaw,

And Wilde's *Salomé*, none has ever reached me.

Back to their native land they must have gone,

Or else you have them here in Germany.

Only to me come down real British plays,

The mid-Victorian twaddle, the false gems

Which on the stretched forefinger of oblivion
Glitter a moment, and then perish paste.

FAUST (*drily*). Well, if I learn of any critic's death
Leaving a vacant place upon the Press,
You'll hear from me; meanwhile, Mephisto mine,
As we must needs play out our little play,
Whom would you cast for Margaret, *alias* Gretchen?
Kindly sketch out an inexpensive *Faust*,
Modelled on the Vedrenne and Barker style
Once much in favour at the English Court.

MEPHISTO. The stage is now an auditorium,
And all the audiences are amateurs,
First-nighters at the bottom of their heart.
What do they care for drama in the least?
All that they need are complimentary stalls,
To know the leading actor, to be round
At dress rehearsals, or behind the scenes,
To hear the row the actor-manager
Had with the author or the leading lady,
Then to recount the story at the Garrick,
Where, lingering lovingly on kippered lies,
They babble over chestnuts and their punch
And stale round-table jests of years ago.

FAUST. So Mephistopheles is growing old!
Kindly omit your stage philosophy,
And tell me all your plans about the play.
MEPHISTO. First we must make you young
and fresh as paint,
Philters and elixirs are out of date.
A week in London—that is what you want;
London Society is our objective.
There you will find a not unlikely Gretchen,
For actresses are all the rage just now;
Countesses quarrel over Edna May,
And Mrs. Patrick Campbell is received
In the best houses. I shall introduce you
As a philosopher from Tübingen.
A sort of Nordau, no? Then Doctor Reich—
Advocates polyandry, children suffrage—
One man, one pianola; the usual thing
That will secure success: here is a card
For Thursday next—Lady Walpurge 'At
Home'
From nine till twelve—a really charming
hostess.
Her ladyship is intellectual,
The husband rich, dishonest, a collector
Of *objets d'art*, especially old masters.
He got his title for his promises

To England in the war; financed the raid,
A patriot millionaire within whose veins
Imperial pints of German-Jewish blood
Must make the English think imperially,
And rather bear with all the ills they have
Than fly to others that they know not of.

FAUST. Excellent plan! Except at Covent Garden,
I've hardly been in England since the 'eighties.

ACT II.

Scene: Brocken House, Park Lane.

The top of the Grand Staircase. LORD *and* LADY WALPURGE *receiving their guests. The greatest taste is shown in the decorations, which are lent for the occasion of the play free of charge, owing to the deserved popularity of Mr. George Alexander. Furniture supplied by Waring, selected by Mr. Percy Macquoid; Old Masters by Agnew & Son, P. & D. Colnaghi, Dowdeswell & Dowdeswell; Wigs by Clarkson. A large, full-length Reynolds, seen above the well of staircase;* R. *a Gainsborough,* L. *a Hoppner. The party is not very smart, rather intellectual and plutocratic; well-known musicians and artists in group* R., *and second-rate literary people* L. *An*

Irish peer and a member of the White Rose League are the only 'Society' present. There are no actors or actresses. FAUST, *who has aged considerably since the Prologue, is an obvious failure, and is seen talking to a lady journalist.* MEPHISTOPHELES, *disguised as a Protectionist Member of Parliament, is in earnest conversation with* LORD WALPURGE. FOOTMAN *announcing the guests: The Bishop of Hereford, Mr. Maldonado, Mr. Andrew Undershaft, Mr. Harold Hodge, Mrs. Gorringe, Mr. and Mrs. Aubrey Tanqueray, &c.*

LADY WALPURGE (*archly*). Ah, Mr. Tanqueray, you never forwarded me my photographs; it is nearly three weeks ago since I sent you a cheque for them.

TANQUERAY. Labby has been poisoning your mind against me. You shall have a proof to-morrow!

FOOTMAN. Mr. Gillow Waring.

LADY WALPURGE. I was so afraid you were not coming. My husband thought you would give us the slip.

WARING. How charming your decorations are! You must give me some ideas for my new yacht, you have such perfect taste.

MALDONADO. Walpurge! what will you take for that Reynolds? Or will you swap it for my Velasquez?

WALPURGE. My dear Maldo, I always do my deals through——

FOOTMAN. Mr. Walter Dowdeswell.

WALPURGE. Through Dowdeswell and Dowdeswell; and you, my dear Maldo, if you want to get rid of your Velasquez, ought to join the National Art Collections Fund, or go and see——

FOOTMAN. Mr. Lockett Agnew. 'Er 'Ighness the Princess Swami.

Enter the PRINCESS SALOMÉ.

LADY JOURNALIST. Fancy having that woman here. She is not recognised in any decent society, she is nothing but an adventuress; talks such bad French, too. Have you ever seen her, Doctor Faustus?

FAUST. Yes, I have met her very often in Germany. Though the Emperor would not receive her at first, she is much admired in Europe.

LADY JOURNALIST (*hedging*). I wonder

where she gets her frocks? They must be worth a good deal.

FAUST. From Ricketts and Shannon, if you want to know.

LADY JOURNALIST. Dear Doctor, you know everything! Let me see: Ricketts and Shannon is that new place in Regent Street, rather like Lewis and Allenby's, I suppose?

FAUST. Yes, only different.

IRISH PEER (*to* FAUST). Do you think Lady Walpurge will ever get into Society?

FAUST. Not if she gives her guests such wretched coffee.

LADY JOURNALIST. It's nothing to her tea. I've never had such bad tea. Besides, she cannot get actors or actresses to come to her house.

LADY WALPURGE (*overhearing*). I expect *Sir Herbert and Lady Beerbohm Tree* here to-night, and perhaps VIOLA. (*Sensation.*)

[*Enter, hurriedly,* MR. C. T. H. HELMSLEY.] Mr. Alexander, a moment with you! A most important telegram has just arrived.

FAUST (*reading*). 'Handed in at Greba Castle, 10.15. Reply paid. Do not close with Stephen Phillips until you have seen my

play of *Gretchen*, same subject, five acts and twelve tableaux.—HALL CAINE.' Where is Mr. Stephen Phillips? [STEPHEN PHILLIPS *advances.*] My dear Phillips, I think we will put up *Harold Hodge* instead. 'The Last of the Anglo-Saxon Editors,' by the last Anglo-Saxon poet.

CURTAIN.

(1906.)

To W. BARCLAY SQUIRE, ESQ.

SHAVIANS FROM SUPERMAN.

DONNA ANA *has vanished to sup her man at the Savoy; the* DEVIL *and the* STATUE *are descending through trap, when a voice is heard crying, 'Stop, stop'; the mechanism is arrested and there appears in the empyrean* MR. CHARLES HAZELWOOD SHANNON, *the artist, with halo.*

THE DEVIL (*while Shannon regains his breath*). Really, Mr. Shannon, this is a great pleasure and *quite* unexpected. I am truly honoured. No quarrel I hope with the International? Pennell quite well? How is the Whistler memorial getting on?

SHANNON. So-so. To be quite frank I had no time to prepare for Heaven, and earth has become intolerable for me. (*Seeing the Statue.*) Is that a Rodin you have there?

THE DEVIL. Oh! I forgot, let me introduce you. Commander! Mr. C. H. Shannon, a most distinguished painter, the English Velasquez, the Irish Titian, the Scotch Giorgione, all in one. Mr. Shannon, his Excellency the Commander.

SHANNON. Delighted, I am sure. The real reason for my coming here is that I could stand Ricketts no longer. Ricketts the artist I adore. Ricketts the causeur is delightful. Ricketts the enemy, entrancing. Ricketts the friend, one of the best. But Ricketts, when designing dresses for the Court, Trench, and other productions, is not very amiable.

THE STATUE (*sighing*). Ah! yes, I know Ricketts.

THE DEVIL (*sighing*). We all know Ricketts. Never mind, he shall not come here. I shall give special orders to Charon. Come on to the trap and we can start for the palace.

SHANNON. Ah! yes. I heard you were moving to the Savoy. Think it will be a success?

[*They descend and no reply is heard. Whisk! Mr. Frank Richardson on this occasion does not appear; void and emptiness; the fireproof curtain may be lowered here in accordance with the County Council regulations; moving portraits of deceased, and living dramatic critics can be thrown without risk of ignition on the curtain by magic lantern.*

The point of this travesty will be entirely lost to those who have not read 'Man and Superman.' It is the first masterpiece in the English literature of the twentieth century. It is also necessary to have read the dramatic criticisms in the daily press, and to have some acquaintance with the Court management, the Stage Society, and certain unlicensed plays; and to know that Mr. Ricketts designs scenery. This being thoroughly explained, the Curtain may rise; discovering a large Gothic Hall, decorated in the 1880 *taste. Allegories by Watts on the wall—'Time cutting the corns of Eternity,' 'Love whistling down the ear of Life,' 'Youth catching Crabs,' &c. Windows by Burne-Jones and Morris. A Peacock Blue Hungarian Band playing music on Dolmetsch instruments by Purcell, Byrde, Bull, Bear, Palestrina, and Wagner, &c. Various well-known people crowd the Stage. Among the* LIVING *may be mentioned Mr. George Street; Mr. Max Beerbohm and his brother; Mr. Albert Rothenstein and his brother, &c. The company is intellectual and artistic; not in any way smart. The Savile and Athenæum Clubs are well represented, but not the Garrick, the Gardenia, nor any of the establishments in the vicinity of Leicester Square. The Princess Salomé is greeting*

some of the arrivals — The Warden of Keble, The President of Magdalen Coll., Oxford, and others—who stare at her in a bewildered fashion.

THE DEVIL. Silence, please, ladies and gentlemen, for his Excellency the Commander. (*A yellowish pallor moves over the audience; effect by Gordon Craig.*)

THE STATUE. It was my intention this evening to make a few observations on flogging in the Navy, Vaccination, the Censor, Vivisection, the Fabian Society, the Royal Academy, Compound Chinese Labour, Style, Simple Prohibition, Vulgar Fractions, and other kindred subjects. But as I opened the paper this morning, my eye caught these headlines: 'Future of the House of Lords,' 'Mr. Edmund Gosse at home,' 'The Nerves of Lord Northcliffe,' 'Interview with Mr. Winston Churchill,' 'Reported Indisposition of Miss Edna May.' A problem was thus presented to me. Will I, shall I, ought I to speak to my friends *here*—ahem!—and elsewhere, on the subject about which they came to hear me speak. (*Applause.*) No, I said; the bounders must be disappointed; otherwise

they will know what to expect. You must always surprise your audience. When it has been advertised (sufficiently) that I am going to speak about the truth, for example, the audience comes here expecting me to speak about fiction. The only way to surprise them is to speak the truth and that I always do. Nothing surprises English people more than truth; they don't like it; they don't pay any attention to those (such as my friend Mr. H. G. Wells and myself) who *trade* in truth; but they listen and go away saying, 'How very whimsical and paradoxical it all is,' and 'What a clever adventurer the fellow is, to be sure.' 'That was a good joke about duty and beauty being the same thing'—that was a joke I did *not* make. It is not my kind of joke—but when people begin ascribing to you the jokes of other people, you become a living—I was going to say statue—but I mean a living classic.

THE DEVIL. I thought you disliked anything classic?

THE STATUE. Ahem! only *dead* classics—especially when they are employed to protect romanticism. Dead classics are the protective

tariffs put on all realism and truth by bloated idealism. In a country of plutocrats, idealism keeps out truth: idealism is more expensive, and therefore more in demand. In America, there are more plutocrats, and therefore more idealists . . . . as Mr. Pember Reeves has pointed out in New Zealand. . . . .

THE DEVIL. But I say, is this drama?

THE STATUE. Certainly not. It is a discussion taking place at a theatre. It is no more drama than a music-hall entertainment, or a comic opera, or a cinematograph, or a hospital operation, all of which things take place in theatres. But surely it is more entertaining to come to a discussion charmingly mounted by Ricketts—discussion too, in which every one knows what he is going to say—than to flaccid plays in which the audience always knows what the actors *are* going to say better often than the actors. The sort of balderdash which Mr. —— serves up to us for plays.

THE DEVIL (*peevish and old-fashioned*). I wish you would define drama.

HANKIN (*advancing*). Won't you have tea, Commander? It's not bad tea.

THE STATUE. I was afraid you were going to talk idealism.

HANKIN (*aside*). Excuse my interrupting, but I want you to be particularly nice to the Princess Salomé. You know she was jilted by the Censor. She has brought her music.

THE DEVIL. You might introduce her to Mrs. Warren. But I am afraid the Princess has taken rather too much upon herself this evening.

THE STATUE. Yes, she has taken too much; I am sure she has taken too much.

A JOURNALIST. Is that the Princess Salomé who has Mexican opals in her teeth, and red eyebrows and green hair, and curious rock-crystal breasts?

THE DEVIL. Yes, that is the Princess Salomé.

SHANNON. I know the Princess quite well. Ricketts makes her frocks. Shall I ask her to dance?

THE DEVIL. Yes, anything to distract her attention from the guests. These artistic English people are so easily shocked. They don't understand Strauss, nor indeed anything

until it is quite out of date. I want to make Hell at least as attractive as it is painted; a *place* as well as a *condition* within the meaning of the Act. Full of wit, beauty, pleasure, freedom——

THE STATUE. Ugh—ugh.

SHANNON. Will you dance for us, Princess?

SALOMÉ. Anything for you, dear Mr. Shannon, only my ankles are a little sore to-night. How is dear Ricketts? I want new dresses so badly.

SHANNON. I suppose by this time he is in Heaven. But won't you dance just to make things go? And then the Commander will lecture on super-maniacs later on!

SALOMÉ. Señor Diavolo, what will you give me if I dance to-night?

THE DEVIL. Anything you like, Salomé. I swear by the dramatic critics.

HANKIN (*correcting*). You mean the Styx.

THE DEVIL. Same thing. Dance without any further nonsense, Salomé. Forget that you are in England. This is an unlicensed house.

[SALOMÉ *dances the dance of the Seven Censors.*

THE DEVIL (*applauding*). She is charming. She is quite charming. Salomé, what shall I do for you? You who are like a purple patch in some one else's prose. You who are like a black patch on some one else's face. You are like an Imperialist in a Radical Cabinet. You are like a Tariff Reformer in a Liberal-Unionist Administration. You are like the Rokeby Velasquez in St. Paul's Cathedral. What can I do for you who are fairer than——

SALOMÉ. This sort of thing has been tried on me before. Let us come to business. I want Mr. Redford's head on a four-wheel cab.

THE DEVIL. No, not that. You must not ask that. I will give you Walkley's head. He has one of the best heads. He is not ignorant. He really knows what he is talking about.

SALOMÉ. I want Mr. Redford's head on a four-wheel cab.

THE DEVIL. Salomé, listen to me. Be reasonable. Do not interrupt me. I will give you William Archer's head. He is charming—a cultivated, liberal-minded critic. He is

too liberal. He admires Stephen Phillips. I will give you his dear head if you release me from my oath.

SALOMÉ. I want Mr. Redford's head on the top of a four-wheel cab. Remember your oath!

THE DEVIL. I remember I swore *at*—I mean *by*—the dramatic critics. Well, I am offering them to you. Exquisite and darling Salomé, I will give you the head of Max Beerbohm. It is unusually large, but it is full of good things. What a charming ornament for your mantelpiece! You will be in the movement. How every one will envy you! People will call upon you who never used to call. Others will send you invitations. You will at last get into English society.

SALOMÉ. I want Mr. Redford's head on the top of a four-wheel cab.

THE DEVIL. Salomé, come hither. Have you ever looked at the *Daily Mirror?* Only in the *Daily Mirror* should one look. For it tells the truth sometimes. Well, I will give you the head of Hamilton Fyfe. He is my best friend. No critic is so fond of the drama as Hamilton Fyfe. (*Huskily.*) Salomé, I

will give you W. L. Courtney's head. I will give you all their heads.

SALOMÉ. I have the scalps of most critics. I want Mr. Redford's head on a four-wheel cab.

THE DEVIL. Salomé! You do not know what you ask. Mr. Redford is a kind of religion. He represents the Lord Chamberlain. You know the dear Lord Chamberlain. You would not harm one of his servants, especially when they are not insured. It would be cruel. It would be irreligious. It would be in bad taste. It would not be respectable. Listen to me; I will give you all Herod's Stores. . . . . Salomé, Shannon was right. You HAVE taken too much, or you would not ask this thing. See, I will give you Mr. Redford's body, but not his head. Not that, not that, my child.

SALOMÉ. I want Mr. Redford's head on a four-wheel cab.

THE DEVIL. Salomé, I must tell you a secret. It is terrible for me to have to tell the truth. The Commander said that I would have to tell the truth. MR. REDFORD HAS NO HEAD!

[*The audience long before this have begun to put on their cloaks, and the dramatic*

critics have gone away to describe the cold reception with which the play has been greeted. All the people on the stage cover their heads except the STATUE, *who has become during the action of the piece more and more like Mr. Bernard Shaw. Curtain descends slowly.*

(1907.)

To ARTHUR CLIFTON, ESQ.

SOME DOCTORED DILEMMA.

A New Epilogue for the Last Performance of Mr. Shaw's Play.

THOUGH Mr. Bernard Shaw has set the fashion in prologues for modern plays, his admirers were not altogether satisfied with the epilogue to *The Doctor's Dilemma*. It is far too short; and leaves us in the dark as to whom 'Jennifer Dubedat' married. Epilogues, as students of English drama remember, were often composed by other authors. The following experiment ought to have come from the hand of Mr. St. John Hankin, that master of Dramatic Sequels, but his work on the 'Cassilis Engagement' deprived Mr. Shaw of the only possible collaborator.

[Scene: *A Bury Street Picture Gallery*—Messrs. Gersaint & Co. *The clock strikes ten, and* Sir Colenso Ridgeon *is seen going out rather crestfallen by centre door.* Mr. Gersaint, *the manager, is nailing up a notice*

[*'All works of art, for art's sake or sale; prices on application. Catalogue* 1*s.*). MR. JACK STEPNEY, *the secretary, is receiving the private view cards from the visitors who are trooping in; some sneak catalogues as they enter, and on being asked for payment protest and produce visiting cards and press vouchers instead of shillings. Artists, Royal Academicians,* MR. EDMUND GOSSE, *and other members of the House of Lords discovered; men of letters, art critics, connoisseurs, journalists, collectors, dealers, private viewers, impostors, dramatic critics, poets, pickpockets, politicians crowd the stage. From time to time* JACK STEPNEY *places a red star on the picture frames in the course of the action.*]

J. STEPNEY. I thought all the pictures had been bought by Dr. Schutzmacher.

GERSAINT. So they were, my boy, but he has wired saying they are all to be put up for sale at double the price; capital business, you see we shall get two commissions.

J. STEPNEY. Yes, sir. It is fortunate Mrs. Dubedat did not have the prices marked in the Catalogue.

GERSAINT. You mean Mrs. Schutzmacher. (*Drives in last nail*).

J. STEPNEY. Yes, sir.

Enter a striking-looking man, not unlike a Holbein drawing, at a distance: but on nearer inspection, as he comes within range of the footlights, he is more like an Isaac Oliver or Nicholas Lucidel. He examines the notice and sniffs.

S.L.M.N.U.H.D. Which are the works of Art?

EDMUND GOSSE. Can you tell me who that is? He is one of the few people I don't know by sight. A celebrity of course; and do point out any obscurities. Every one is so distinguished. It is rather confusing.

GERSAINT. That is the Holland Park Wonder, so-called because he lives at the top of a tower in Holland Park—the greatest Art Connoisseur in England. Mr. Charles Ricketts, the greatest——

EDMUND GOSSE. Thank you; thank you.

MR. FREDERICK WEDMORE (*interrupting*). Can you tell me whether the frames are included in the prices of the pictures?

J. STEPNEY. No, sir. They are stock frames, the property of the Gallery, and are only lent for the occasion.

MR. FREDERICK WEDMORE. Then I fear I

cannot buy; a naked picture without a frame is useless to me.

CHARLES RICKETTS. Do you think I could buy a frame without a picture?

JOSEPH PENNELL. I say Ricketts, it seems a beastly shame we didn't get this show for the International. It would have been good 'ad.' What's the use of Backers? I see they're selling well.

CHARLES RICKETTS. But, my dear Pennell, you're doing the *Life*, aren't you?—the real Dubedat?

JOSEPH PENNELL. Oh, yes, but the family have injuncted Heinemann from publishing the letters: Mr. Justice Kekewich will probably change his opinion when the weather gets warmer. It is only an interim injunction.

CHARLES RICKETTS. A sort of Clapham Injunction.

SIR WILLIAM RICHMOND, K.C.B., R.A. If I had known what a stupendous genius Dubedat was, I should have given him part of the 'New Bailey' to decorate.

D. S. MACCOLL. Let us be thankful he's as dead as Bill Bailey.

SIR CHARLES HOLROYD (*smoothing things*

over). I think we ought to have an example for the Tate. (MacColl *winces.*) The Chantrey Bequest — (MacColl *winces again*) — might do something; and I must write to Lord Balcarres. The National Arts Collections Fund may have something over from the subscriptions to the Rokeby Velasquez; but I want to see what Colvin is going to choose for the British Museum.

Sidney Colvin. I think we might have this drawing; it stands on its legs. A most interesting fellow Dubedat. He reminds me of Con——

George Moore. Not Stevenson, though *he* had no talent whatever. My dear Mr. Colvin, have you ever read 'Vailima Letters'? I have read parts of them.

Sidney Colvin (*coldly*). Ah, really! Did you suffer very much?

Sir Hugh P. Lane. Do you think, Mr. Gersaint, the artist's widow would give me one of the pictures for the Dublin Gallery? We have no money at all. *I have no money*, but all the artists are giving pictures: Sargent, Shannon, Lavery, Frank Dicksee; and Rodin is giving a plaster cast.

GERSAINT. How charming and insinuating you are, Sir Hugh. We can make special reductions for the Dublin Gallery, but you can hardly expect charitable bequests from picture dealers.

SIR HUGH P. LANE. Oh! but Dowdeswell, Agnew, Sulley, Wertheimer, P. and D. Colnaghi, and Humphry Ward are all giving me pictures. Now, look here, I'll buy these five drawings, and you can give me these two. I'll give you a Gainsborough drawing in exchange for them. It has a very good history. First it belonged to Ricketts, then to Rothenstein, then Wilson Steer, and then to the Carfax Gallery, and . . . . then it came into my possession, and all that in three months. (*Bargain concluded.*)

MR. PFFUNGST (*aside*). But is there any evidence that it belonged to Gainsborough?

SIR HUGH P. LANE (*turning to a titled lady*). Oh, do come to tea next Saturday. I want to show you my new Titian which I *have just bought for* 2100*l.*

TITLED LADY. Sir Hugh, *can* you tell me who Mrs. Dubedat is now?

SIR HUGH P. LANE. Oh, yes. She married

Dr. Schutzmacher, the specialist on bigamy only this morning.

TITLED LADY. How interesting. I should like to meet her. Dresses divinely, I'm told.

SIR HUGH P. LANE. She's coming to tea next Saturday; such good tea, too!

TITLED LADY. That will be delightful.

ST. JOHN HANKIN (*loftily*). Can you tell me whether this charmian artist is pronounced Dubédat or Dubèdat?

W. P. KER (*in deep Scotch*). Non Dubitat. (*He does not speak again.*)

P. G. KONODY. Oh, Mr. Phillips, do tell me *exactly* what *you* think of this artist!

CLAUDE PHILLIPS. I think he wanted a good smacking.

P. G. KONODY. Ah, yes, his art *has* a smack about it. (*Aside.*) Good heading for the *Daily Mail*, 'Art with a smack.' (*Writes in catalogue.*)

WILL ROTHENSTEIN. When I see pictures of this kind, my dear Gersaint, they seem to me to explain your existence. An artist without a conscience . . . . (*Sees* ROGER FRY.) My dear Fry, what are *you* doing here? Buying for New York? (*Laughs meaningly.*)

ROGER FRY. Oh, no; but I hear Gersaint has a very fine picture by the Maîtresse of the Moulin Rouge. Weale says it is School of Gheel (*pronounced Kail*).

WILL ROTHENSTEIN. Kail Yard I should think; do look at these things.

ROGER FRY (*vaguely*). Who are they by? Oh, yes, Dubedat, of course.

[FRY *and* ROTHENSTEIN *regard picture with disdain; it withers under their glance. Stage illusion by* MASKELYNE *and* THEODORE COOK. STEPNEY *places a red star on it.*

GERSAINT. Well, Mr. Bowyer Nichols, I hope we shall have a good long notice in the *Westminster Gazette*. Now if there is any drawing . . .

BOWYER NICHOLS (*very stiffly*). No, there isn't. I don't think the Exhibition sufficiently important; everything seems to me cribbed: most of the pictures look like reproductions of John, Orpen or Neville Lytton.

GERSAINT. Ah, no doubt, influenced by Neville Lytton. That portrait of Mr. Cutler Walpole has a Neville Lytton feeling. Neville Lytton in his earlier manner.

Enter SIR PATRICK CULLEN, SIR RALPH BLOOMFIELD BONNINGTON *and* SIR COLENSO RIDGEON.

SIR C. RIDGEON. Ah, Sir Patrick, I have just heard that the pictures are for sale; now I am going to plunge a little. I think they will rise in value; and by the way I want to ask your opinion as a scientific man. If I treat four artists with *virus obscœnum* for three weeks, what will be the condition of the remaining artists in the fourth week?

SIR P. CULLEN. Colenso, Colenso, you ought to have been a senior wrangler and then abolished.

SIR C. RIDGEON. What a cynic you are. All the same I've had great successes, though Dubedat *was* one of our failures. A rather anæmic member of the New English Art Club come to me for treatment, and in less than a year he was an Associate of the Royal Academy; what do you say to that?

SIR P. CULLEN. Out of Phagocyte, out of mind.

SIR R. B. B. My dear Sir Patrick, how prejudiced you are. Take MacColl's case: a typical instance of *morbus ferox ars nova*

anglicana: under dear Colenso he became an official at the Tate.

SIR C. RIDGEON. Then there's Sir Charles Holroyd, you remember his high tempera?

SIR P. CULLEN. There has been a relapse I hear from the catalogue.

SIR R. B. B. How grossly unfair; that is a false bulletin issued by the former nurse: 'the evil that men do lives after them.'

SIR P. CULLEN. My dear B. B., this is not Dubedat's funeral. Do you think Bernard Shaw will like the new epilogue?

BERNARD SHAW. He will; I'm shaw.

L. C. C. INSPECTOR. Excuse me, is Mr. Vedrenne here? Ah, yes! There is Mr. Vedrenne. Will you kindly answer some of my questions? Is that door on the left a real door? In case of fire I cannot allow property doors; the actors might be seized with stage fright, and they must have, as Sir B. B. would say, 'their exits and their entrances.'

VEDRENNE. Everything at the Court Theatre, my dear sir, is real. Ask Mr. Franks, he will tell you the door is not even a jar. The art, the acting, the plays, even the audience is real, except a few dramatic critics I

cannot exclude. I admit the audience looks improbable at matinées; *out of Court* is a truth in art of which we are only dimly beginning to understand the significance. [*Noise outside.*

Enter JENNIFER, *dressed in deep mourning.*

JENNIFER (*with a bright smile*). Mr. Vedrenne, I have just had a telegram saying that my husband, Leo, was killed in his motor after leaving me at the Synagogue. His last words were: 'Jennifer, promise me that you will wear mourning if I die, merely to mark the difference between Dubedat and myself.' This afternoon I am going to marry Blenkinsop. How are the sales going?

VEDRENNE. Well, I think we might have the catechism or the churching of heroines. What is your name?

JENNIFER. Jennifer.

VEDRENNE. Where did you get that name?

JENNIFER. From Bernard Shaw in my baptism.

MR. REDFORD (*Licenser of Plays*). Mr. Shaw, I really must point out that this passage comes from the Anglican Prayer-book. Are you aware of that? I have a suggestion of my own for ending the play.

BERNARD SHAW. Oh, shut up! Let us have my ten commandments.

GRANVILLE BARKER. My dear Shaw, you sent them to Wells for revision and he lost them in the Tube. I can remember the first one, 'Maude spake these words and said: "Thou shalt have none other Shaws but me."'

BERNARD SHAW. How careless of Wells. I remember the second: 'Do not indulge in craven imitation.'

W. L. COURTNEY. The third commandment runs: 'Thou shalt not covet George Alexander.'

GRANVILLE BARKER. One of them runs: 'Do not commit yourself to Beerbohm Tree, though his is His Majesty's . . .' But we shall never get them right. We must offer a reward for their recovery. I vote that Walkley now says the *credo*. That, I think, expresses every one's sentiment.

A. B. WALKLEY (*reluctantly*). I believe in Bernard Shaw, in Granville Barker, and (*heartily*) in *The Times*.

WILLIAM ARCHER. Plaudite, missa est.

(1907.) CURTAIN.

THE JADED INTELLECTUALS.

A Dialogue.

Scene: The Smoking-room of the Elivas Club.

Characters: Laudator Temporeys, *ætat.* 54, *a distinguished literary critic, and* Luke Cullus, *a rich connoisseur of art and life. They are not smoking nor drinking spirits. One is sipping barley water, the other Vichy.*

Luke Cullus. You are a dreadful pessimist!

Laudator Temporeys. Alas! there is no such thing in these days. We are merely disappointed optimists. When Walter Pater died I did not realise that English literature expired. Yet the event excited hardly any interest in the Press. Our leading weekly, the *Spectator*, merely mentioned that Brasenose College, Oxford, had lost an excellent Dean.

L. C. I can hardly understand you. Painting, I admit, is entirely a lost art, so far as England is concerned. The death of Burne-

Jones brought our tradition to an end. I see no future for any of the arts except needlework, of which, I am told, there is a hopeful revival. But in your fields of literature, what a number of great names! How I envy you!

L. T. Who is there?

L. C. Well, to take the novelists first: you have the great Thomas Hardy, H. G. Wells, Henry James, Rudyard Kipling, Maurice Hewlett. . . . . I can't remember the names of any others just at present. Then take the poets: Austin Dobson, my own special favourite; and among the younger men, A. E. Housman, Laurence Housman, Yeats, Arthur Symons, Laurence Binyon, William Watson——

L. T. (*interrupting*). Who always keeps one foot in Wordsworth's grave. But all the men you mention, my dear Cullus, belong to the last century. They have done their best work. Hardy has become mummy, and Henry James is sold in Balham. Except Hardy, they have become unintelligible. The theory that 'to be intelligible is to be found out' seems to have frightened them. The

books they issue are a series of 'not-at-home' cards—sort of P.P.C.'s on posterity. And the younger poets, too, belong to the last century, or they stand in the same relation to their immediate predecessors, to borrow one of your metaphors, as *l'art nouveau* does to Chippendale. Oh, for the days of Byron, Keats, and Shelley!

L. C. All of whom died before they were matured. You seem to resent development. In literature I am a mere *dilettante*. A fastidious reader, but not an expert. I know what I don't like; but I never know what I shall like. At least twice a year I come across a book which gives me much pleasure. As it comes from the lending library it is never quite new. That is an added charm. If it happens to have made a sensation, the sensation is all over by the time it reaches me. The book has matured. A quite new book is always a little crude. It suggests an evening paper. There at least you will agree. But to come across a work which Henry James published, say, last year, is, I assure you, like finding a Hubert Van Eyck in the Brompton Road.

L. T. I wish I could share your enthusiasm, or that I could change places with you. Every year the personality of a new artist is revealed to you. I know you only pretend not to admire the modern school of painting. You find it a convenient pose. Your flora and your fauna are always receiving additions; while my garden is withered; my zoo is out of repair. The bars are broken; the tanks have run dry. There is hardly a trace of life except in the snake-house, and, as I mentioned, the last giraffe is dead.

L. C. Our friend, Dr. Chalmers Mitchell, is fortunately able to give us a different account of the institution in Regent's Park. You are quite wrong about modern painting. None of the younger men can paint at all. A few of them can draw, I admit. It is all they can do. The death of Charles Furse blasted all my hopes of English art. Whistler is dead; Sargent is an American.

L. T. Well, so is Henry James, if it comes to that. And so *was* Whistler. But I have seen the works of several young artists who I understand are carrying out the great traditions of painting. Ricketts, Shannon, Wilson

Steer, Rothenstein, Orpen, Nicholson, Augustus John are surely worthy successors to Turner, Alfred Stevens, and the Pre-Raphaelites.

L. C. They are merely connoisseurs gifted with expressing their appreciation of the past in paint. They appeal to you as a literary man. You like to detect in every stroke of their brushes an echo of the past. Their pictures have been *heard*, not *seen*. All the younger artists are committing burglary on the old masters.

L. T. It is you who are a disappointed optimist.

L. C. Not about literature or the drama. I seem to hear, with Ibsen's 'Master Builder,' the younger generation knocking at the door.

L. T. It comes in without knocking in my experience; and generally has *fig*-leaves in its hair—a decided advance on the coiffure of Hedda Gabler's lover.

L. C. But look at Bernard Shaw.

L. T. Why should I look at Bernard Shaw? I read his plays and am more than ever convinced that he has gone on the wrong lines. His was the opportunity. He made *il gran*

refuto. Some one said that George Saintsbury never got over the first night of *Hernani.* Shaw never recovered the *première* of *Ghosts.* He roofed our Thespian temple with Irish slate. His disciples found English drama solid brick and leave it plaster of Paris. Yet Shaw might have been another Congreve.

L. C. *Troja fuit.* We do not want another. I am sure you never went to the Court at all.

L. T. Oh, yes, I attended the last *levée.* But the drama is too large a subject, or, in England, too small a subject to discuss. We live, as Professor Mahaffy has reminded us, in an Alexandrian age. We are wounded with archæology and exquisite scholarship, and must drag our slow length along. . . . . We were talking about literature. Where are the essayists, the Lambs, and the Hazlitts? I know you are going to say Andrew Lang; I say it every day; it is like an Amen in the Prayer-book; it occurs quite as frequently in periodical literature. He *was* my favourite essayist, during the *last* fifteen years of the *last* century. What is he now? An historian, a folk-lorist, an archæologist, a controversialist.

I believe he is an expert on portraits of Mary Stuart. You were going on to say G. K. Chesterton——

L. C. No. I was going to say Max Beerbohm. Some of his essays I put beside Lamb's, and above Hazlitt's. He has style; but then I am prejudiced because he is the only modern artist I really admire. He is a superb draughtsman and our only caricaturist. Then there is George Moore. I don't care for his novels, but his essays are delightful. George Moore really counts. Few people know so little about art; yet how delightfully he writes about it. Everything comes to him as a surprise. He gives you the same sort of enjoyment as you would derive from hearing a nun preach on the sins of smart society.

L. T. Moore is one of many literary Acteons who have mistaken Diana for Aphrodite.

L. C. You mean he is great dear; but he gets hold of the right end of the stick.

L. T. And he generally soils it. But you know nothing about literature. The age requires blood and Kipling gave it Condy's Fluid (*drinks barley water*). The age requires

life, and Moore gave us a gallantee show from Montmartre (*drinks barley water*). Even I require life. To-morrow I am off to Aix.

L. C. — les Bains?

L. T. No, la-Chapelle!

L. C. Oh, then we shall probably meet. Thanks. I can get on my own overcoat. I shall probably be there myself in a few weeks.

ABBEY THOUGHTS.

SHALL some memorial of Herbert Spencer be erected in the Abbey, or rather in what journalists love to call the 'National Valhalla,' the 'English Pantheon,' or the 'venerable edifice,' where, as Macaulay says, the dust of the illustrious accusers, *et cetera*——? The question was once agitated in a daily paper. It seems that the Dean, when approached on the subject, acted like one of his predecessors in the case of Byron. The Dean is in a very difficult position, because any decision of his must be severely criticised from one quarter or another. The Abbey retains, I understand, some of its pre-Reformation privileges, and is not under the jurisdiction of Bishop or Archbishop. Yet no one who has ever visited the Chapel of St. Edward the Confessor on October 13th, the festival of his translation, can accuse the Abbey authorities of bigotry or narrow-mindedness. Only a few years ago I fought my way, with

other Popish pilgrims, to the shrine of our patron Saint (as he *was*, until superseded by Saint George in the thirteenth century), and there I indulged in overt acts of superstition violating Article XXII. of 'the Church of England by law established.' A verger, with some colonial tourists, arrived during our devotions, but his voice was lowered out of regard for our feelings. Indeed, both he and the tourists adopted towards us an attitude of respectful curiosity (not altogether unpleasant), which was in striking contrast to the methods of the continental *Suisse* routing out worshippers from a side chapel of a Catholic church in order to show Baedeker-ridden sightseers an altar-piece by Rotto Rotinelli.

Thoughts of Cranmer, Latimer, and Ridley irresistibly mingled with my devotions. What had the poor fellows burnt for, after all? Here we were ostentatiously ignoring English history and the adjacent Houses of Parliament; outraging the rubrics by ritual observations for which poor curates in the East End are often suspended, and before now have been imprisoned. I could not help thinking that the Archbishop of Westminster would hardly

care to return these hospitalities, by permitting, on August 24th, a memorial service for Admiral Coligny in Westminster Cathedral. . . . . I rose from my knees a new Luther, with something like a Protestant feeling, and scrutinised severely the tombs in Poets' Corner. Even there I found myself confronted with an almost irritating liberalism. Here was Alexander Pope, who rejected all the overtures of Swift and Atterbury to embrace the Protestant faith. And there was Dryden, not, perhaps, a great ornament to my persuasion, but still a Catholic at the last. Dean Panther had not grudged poet Hind his niche in the National Valhalla (I knew I should be reduced to that periphrasis). And here was the mighty Charles Darwin, about whose reception into the English Pantheon (I have fallen again) I remember there was some trouble. Well, if precedent embalms a principle, I venture to raise a thin small voice, and plead for Herbert Spencer. 'The English people,' said a friendly French critic, 'do not admire their great men because they were great, but because they reflect credit on themselves.' So on the score of national vanity

I claim space for Herbert Spencer. Very few Englishmen have exercised such extraordinary influence on continental opinion, which Beaconsfield said was the verdict of posterity. On the news of his death, the Italian Chamber passed a vote of condolence with the English people. I suppose that does not seem a great honour to Englishmen, but to me, an enemy of United Italy, it seemed a great honour, not only to the dead but to the English people. Can you imagine the Swiss Federal Council sending us a vote of condolence on the death of Mr. Hall Caine or Mr. Robert Hichens?

Again, though it is ungrateful of me to mention the fact after my experiences of October 13th, the Abbey was not built nor endowed by people who anticipated the Anglican form of worship being celebrated within its walls, though I admit it has been *restored* by the adherents of that communion. The image of Milton, to take only one instance, would have been quite as objectionable to Henry III. or Abbot Islip as those of Darwin or Spencer. The emoluments bequeathed by Henry VII. and others for requiem masses are now devoted to the edu-

cation of Deans' daughters and Canons' sons. Where incensed altars used to stand, hideous monuments of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries wound the Gothic air with their monstrous ornaments and inapposite epitaphs. St. Paul's may fairly be held sacred to Anglicanism, and I do not think any one would claim sepulture within its precincts for one who was avowedly hostile to Christian or Anglican sentiment. But I think the Abbey has now passed into the category of museums, and might well be declared a national monument under control of the State. The choir, and possibly the nave, should, of course, be severely preserved for whatever the State religion might be at the time. Catholics need not mourn the secularisation of the transepts and chapels, because Leo XIII. renounced officially all claims on the ancient shrines of the Catholic faith, and High Churchmen might console themselves by recalling the fact that Abbots were originally laymen.

My whole scheme would be a return to the practice of the Primitive Church, when priests were only allowed on sufferance inside abbeys

at all. The Low Church party need not be considered, because they can have no sentiment about what they regard as relics of superstition and Broad Churchmen could hardly complain at the logical development of their own principle. The Nonconformists, the backbone of the nation, could not be otherwise than grateful. The decision about admitting busts, statues, or bodies into the national and sacred 'musée des morts' (as the anti-clerical French might call it under the new constitution) would rest with the Home Secretary. This would be an added interest to the duties of a painstaking official, forming pleasant interludes between considering the remission of sentences on popular criminals: it would relieve the Dean and Chapter at all events from grave responsibility. The Home Secretary would always be called the Abbot of Westminster. How picturesque at the formation of a new Cabinet—'*Home Secretary and Abbot of Westminster*, the Right Hon. Mr. So-and-So.' The first duty of the Abbot will be to appoint a Royal Commission to consider the removal of hideous monuments which disfigure the edifice: nothing prior to 1700 coming

under its consideration. A small tablet would recall what has been taken away. Herbert Spencer's claim to a statue would be duly considered, and, I hope, by a unanimous vote some of the other glaring gaps would be filled up. If the Abbey is full of obscurities, very dim religious lights, many of the illustrious names in our literature have been omitted: Byron, Shelley, Keats—to mention only these. There is no monument to Chatterton, one of the more powerful influences in the romantic movement, nor to William Blake, whose boyish inspiration was actually nourished amid that 'Gothic supineness,' as Mr. MacColl has finely said of him. Of all our poets and painters Blake surely deserves a monument in the grey church which became to him what St. Mary Redcliffe was to Chatterton. A window adapted from the book of Job (with the marvellous design of the Morning Stars) was, I am told, actually offered to, and rejected by, the late Dean. To Dante Gabriel Rossetti and the wonderful movement of which he was the dynamic force there should also be a worthy memorial; to Water Pater, the superb aside of English prose; to Cardinal Manning,

the Ecclesiastic of the nineteenth century; and Professor Huxley, that master of dialectics.

A young actor of my acquaintance, who bore the honoured name of Siddons, was invited to take part in the funeral service of the late Sir Henry Irving. His step-father was connected by marriage with the great actress, and he was very proud of his physical resemblance to her portrait by Reynolds. He had played with great success the part of Fortinbras in the provinces, and Mr. Alexander has assured me that he was the ideal impersonator of Rosencrantz. It was an open secret that he had refused Mr. Arthur Bourchier's offer of that *rôle* in a proposed revival of *Hamlet* at the Garrick. Since the burial of Sir Henry Irving in the Abbey, *he has never been seen:* though I saw him myself in the funeral *cortége.* All his friends remember the curious exaltation in his manner a few days before the ceremony, and I cannot help thinking that in a moment of enthusiasm, realising that this was his only chance of burial in the Abbey, he took advantage of the bowed unobservant heads during the prayer of Committal and crept beneath the pall into the great actor's tomb. What his

feelings were at the time, or afterwards when the vault was bricked up, would require the introspective pen of Mr. Henry James and the curious imagination of Mr. H. G. Wells to describe. I have been assured by the vergers that mysterious sounds were heard for some days after this historical occasion. Distressed by the loss of my friend, I applied to the Dean of Westminster and finally to Scotland Yard. I need not say that I was met with sacerdotal indifference on the one hand and with callous officialism on the other. I hope that under the Royal Commission which I have appointed the mystery will be cleared up. Not that I begrudge poor Siddons a niche with Garrick and Irving.

(1906.)

To Professor James Mavor,
Toronto University.

THE ELETHIAN MUSE.

AFTER chaperoning into Fleet Street the eleventh Muse, the rather Batavian lady who is not to be found in that Greek peerage, Lempriere's Dictionary, an obliging correspondent from Edinburgh (an eminent writer to the Signet in our northern Thebes) inquired if there were any more muses who had escaped the students of comparative mythology. It is in response to his letter that I now present, as Mr. Charles Frohman would say, the thirteenth, the Elethian Muse.

Yet I can fancy people asking, Where is the twelfth, and over what art or science does she preside? According to Apollodorus (in a recently recovered fragment from Oxyrynchus), Jupiter, suffering from the chronic headaches consequent on his acrimonious conversations with Athena, decided to consult Vulcan, Æsculapius having come to be regarded as a quack. Mulciber (as we must now call him,

having used the name Vulcan once), suggested an extraordinary remedy, one of the earliest records of a homœopathic expedient. He prescribed that the king of gods and men should keep his ambrosial tongue in the side of his cheek for half an hour three times a day. The operation produced violent retching in the Capitoline stomach. And on the ninth day, from his mouth, quite unarmed, sprang the twelfth muse. The other goddesses were very disgusted; and even the gods declined to have any communication with the new arrival. Apollo, however, was more tolerant, and offered her an asylum on the top shelf of the celestial library. Ever afterwards Musagetes used to be heard laughing immoderately, even for a librarian to the then House of Lords. Jupiter, incensed at this irregularity, paid him a surprise visit one day in order to discover the cause. He stayed, however, quite a long time; and the other deities soon contracted the habit of taking their nectar into the library. With the decline of manners, the twelfth muse began to be invited to dessert, after Juno and the more reputable goddesses had retired. To cut a long story short, when

Pan died, in the Olympian sense very shortly afterwards, all the gods, as we know, took refuge on earth. Jupiter retired to Iceland, Aphrodite to Germany, Apollo to Picardy, but the twelfth muse wandered all over Europe, and found that she was really more appreciated than her sisters. The castle, the abbey, the inn, the lone ale-house on the Berkshire moors, all made her welcome. Finally she settled in Ireland, where, according to a protestant libel, she took the black veil in a nunnery.

She is older than the chestnuts of Vallombrosa. Perhaps of all the ancient goddesses time has chilled her least. Her unfathomable smile wears a touch of something sinister in it, but she has a new meaning for every generation. And yet for Aretino there was some further magic of crimson on her lips and cheeks, lost for us. She is a solecism for the convalescent, and has given consolation to the brave. She has been a diver in rather deep seas and a climber in somewhat steep places. Her censers are the smoking-rooms of clubs; and her presence-lamps are schoolboys' lanterns. Though held the friend of liars and

brutes, she has lived on the indelicacies of kings, and has made even pontiffs laugh. Her mysteries are told in the night-time, and in low whispers to the garish day. She lingers over the stable-yard (no doubt called *mews* for that reason). Her costly breviaries, embellished with strange illuminations, are prohibited under Lord Campbell's Act. Stars mark the places where she has been. Sometimes a scholar's fallacy, a sworn foe to Dr. Bowdler, she is Notre Dame de Milet, our Lady of Limerick.

* * * * *

But it is of her sister I would speak, the thirteenth sister, who was created to keep the eleventh in countenance. She presides over the absurdities of prose. She is responsible for the stylistic flights of Pegasus when, owing to the persuasive eloquence of the Hon. Stephen Coleridge, his bearing-rein has been abolished, and he kicks over the traces.

It was the Elethian Muse who inspired that Oxford undergraduate's peroration to his essay on the Characteristics of St. John's Gospel—

'Furthermore, we may add that St. John's Gospel

is characterised by a tone of fervent piety which is totally wanting in those of the other Evangelists'—

and she hovered over the journalist who, writing for a paper which we need not name, referred to Bacchus as

'that deity whose identity in Greek and Roman mythology is inseparably connected with the over-indulgence of intoxicating liquors.'

There are prose beauties, Elethian jewels, hidden away in Baedeker's mines of pregnant information and barren fact. I know it is fashionable to sneer at Baedeker, especially when you are writing little rhapsodies about remoter parts of Italy, where you have found his knowledge indispensable, if exiguous. You must always kick away the ladder when you arrive at literary distinction. I, who am still climbing and still clinging, can afford to be more generous. Let me, therefore, crown Baedeker with an essayist's parsley, or an academic laurel, ere I too become selfish, forgetful, egoistical, and famous.

In *Southern France*, 1891 edition, p. 137, you find—

To the Pic de Nere, 3¾ hrs. from Luz, there and back 6½ hrs.; a delightful excursion, which can be

made on horseback part of the way: guide 12, horse 10 fr.; *adders abound.*

For synthetic prose you will have to go to Tacitus to find the equal of that passage. No more is heard of the excursion. 'We leave Luz by the Barege road,' the text goes on to say. Reflections and picturesque word-painting are left for Mr. Maurice Hewlett, Mr. Arthur Symons, and Murray.

In *Southern Italy*, Baedeker yields to softer and more Virgilian influences. The purple patches are longer and more frequent. On page 99 we learn not only how to get to Baiae, but that

> Luxury and profligacy, however, soon took up their abode at Baiae, and the desolate ruins, which now alone encounter the eye, point the usual moral!

And from the preface to the same guide we obtain this remarkable advice:—

> The traveller should adopt the Neapolitan custom of rejecting fish that are not quite fresh.

But it is certain educational works, popular in my childhood, that have yielded the more exotic Elethian blossoms for my Anthology. There are passages I would not willingly let die. In one of these books general knowledge

was imparted after the manner of Magnall: 'What is the world? The earth on which we live.' 'Who was Raphael?' 'How is rice made?' After such desultory interrogatives, without any warning, came Question 15: 'Give the character of Prince Potemki':—

Sordidly mean, ostentatiously prodigal, filthily intemperate and affectedly refined. Disgustingly licentious and extravagantly superstitious, a brute in appetite, vigorous though vacillating in action.

Until I went to the University, a great many years afterwards, I never learnt who Potemki was. At the age of seven he stood to me for what 'Timberio' still is for Capriote children. My teacher obviously did not know. She always evaded my inquiries by saying, 'You will know when you are older, darling.' Suspecting her ignorance, I became pertinacious. 'When I am as old as you?' was my ungallant rejoinder. I had to write the character out a hundred times. Then one Christmas Day I ventured to ask my father, who said I would find out about him in Gibbon. But I knew he was not speaking the truth, because he laughed in a nervous, peculiar way, and added that since I was so fond of

history I must go to Oxford when I was older. I loathed history, and inwardly resolved that Cambridge should be my University. My mother admitted entire ignorance of Potemki's identity; and on my sketching his character (for I was proud of the knowledge), said he was obviously a 'horrid' man. His personality shadowed my childhood with a deadly fascination, which has not entirely worn away; producing the same sort of effect on me as an imaginary portrait by Pater.

In a semi-geographical work called *Near Home; or, Europe Described*, published by Hatchards in the fifties (though my friend, Mr. Arthur Humphreys, denies all knowledge of it), I can recall many stereos of dialectic cast in a Socratic mould:—

Q. What is the religion of the Italians? *A.* They are Roman Catholics.

Q. What do the Roman Catholics worship? *A.* Idols and a piece of bread.

Q. Would not God be very angry if He knew the Italians worshipped idols and a piece of bread? *A.* God IS very angry.

Mr. Augustine Birrell, if still interested in educational phenomena, will not be surprised to learn that when I reached to man's estate I

'embraced the errors of Rome,' as my historical manual would have phrased it.

I pity the child who did not learn universal history from Collier. How tame are the periods of Lord Acton, the Rev. William Hunt, Froude, Freeman, Oman, Round, even Macaulay, and little Arthur, beside the rich Elethian periods of William Francis Collier. Not Berenson, not Byron, not Beerbohm, have given us such a picture of Venice as Collier in describing the Council of Ten:—

> The ten were terrible; but still more terrible were the three inquisitors—two black, one red—appointed in 1454. Deep mystery hung over the three. They were elected by the ten; none else knew their names. Their great work was to kill; and no man—doge, councillor, or inquisitor—was beyond their reach. Secretly they pronounced a doom; and ere long the stiletto or the poison cup had done its work, or the dark waters of the lagoon had closed over a life. The spy was everywhere. No man dared to speak out, for his most intimate companions might be on the watch to betray him. Bronze vases, shaped like a lion's mouth, gaped at the corner of every square to receive the names of suspected persons. Gloom and suspicion haunted gondola and hearth!!

It is owing to Collier that I know at least one fact about the Goths who took Rome,

'having reduced the citizens to feed on mice and nettles, A.D. 546,' a diet to which many of the hotel proprietors in the imperial city still treat their clients.

But let *Bellows' Dictionary*, a friend and instructor of riper years, close my list of great examples and my theme. The criticism is apposite to myself, and its only oddity—its Elethian quality, if I may say so—is its presence in that marvellous miniature whose ingenious author you would never suspect could have found room for such portentous observations in the small duodecimo to which he confined himself:—

> Unaffected language is the inseparable accompaniment of natural refinement; but that affectation which would make up for paucity of thought by overstrained expression is a mark of vulgarity from which no accident of social position can redeem those who are guilty of it.

To More Adey, Esq.

THERE IS NO DECAY.

A Lecture delivered in the Old Bluecoat School, Liverpool, on February 12th, 1908.

'In every age there is some question raised as to its wants and powers, its strength and weakness, its great or small worth and work; and in every age that question is waste of time and speech. To a small soul the age which has borne it can appear only as an age of small souls; the pigmy brain and emasculate spirit can perceive in its own time nothing but dwarfishness and emasculation. Each century has seemed to some of its children an epoch of decadence and decline in national life and spiritual, in moral or material glory; each alike has heard the cry of degeneracy raised against it, the wave of emulous impotence set up against the weakness of the age.'—SWINBURNE.

BEFORE the invention of printing, or let me say before the cheapening of printing, the lecturer was in a more fortunate position than he is to-day; because, if a learned man, he was able to give his audience certain pieces of information which he could be fairly sure *some* of his listeners had never heard before. The arrival in town or city of Abelard, Paracelsus, or Erasmus, to take the first in-

stances occurring to me, must have been a great event, the importance of which we can scarcely appreciate at the present day. It must have excited our forefathers, at least as much as the arrival of Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree in any large city, excites I imagine, all of us to-day. But multiplication of books has really rendered lecturers, as instructors, mere intellectual Othellos; their occupation is gone; the erudition of the ages is now within reach of all; though educational books were fairly expensive within living memory. You owe, therefore, a debt of gratitude to the *Times* and the *Daily Mail* for bringing Encyclopædias of all kinds into the range of the shallowest purse and in contact with the shallowest heads in the community.

But in case your learned professors have not contributed all their hidden lore and scholarship to the cheap Encyclopædias, and still allow their learning to leak out at lectures, you may have come expecting instruction from me on some neglected subject. If that is so, I must confess myself at once an impostor. I have no information to give you. I assume your erudition to compensate for

my own lack of it. There are no facts which I might bring before you that you cannot find stated more clearly in valuable manuals or works of reference, if you have not mastered them already. There is no scientific or philosophic theory which I might propound that you could not hear with greater benefit from others.

Briefly, I have no orange up my sleeve.

Let there be no deception or disappointment. I want you to play with an idea as children play at ball — not football — but the old game of catch. And out of this discussion, for I trust that you will all differ, if not with me, at least with each other, trains of thought may be quickened; mental grassland ploughed up; hidden perspectives unveiled. Above all, I would stimulate you to an appreciation of your contemporaries and of contemporary literature, contemporary drama, and contemporary art.

Every few years distinguished men lift their voices, and tell us that all is over, *decay has begun.* The obscure and the anonymous echo the sentiment in the London Press. With the fall of any Government its supporters pro-

phesy the rapid decomposition of the Empire; in the pulpit eloquent preachers of every sect and communion, thundering against the vices of Society, declare that Society is breaking up. Of course, not being in Society, I am hardly in a position to judge; and the vices I know only at second-hand—from the preachers. Yet I see no outward signs of decay in Society; it dresses quite as well, in some ways better than, it did. Society eats as much, judging from the size and number of new restaurants; its patronises as usual the silliest plays in London, and buys in larger quantities than ever the idiotic novels provided for it. Have you ever been to a bazaar in aid of Our Dumb Friends' League? Well, you see Society *there*, I can tell you; it is not dumb. And the conversation sounds no less vapid and no less brilliant than we are told it was in the eighteenth century; the dresses and faces are quite as pretty. But much as I should like to discuss the decay of English Society and the English nation, I feel that such lofty themes are beyond my reach. I am concerned only with the so-called decay of humbler things, the abstract manifestations

of the human intellect, the Arts and Sciences. And lest, weary at the end of my discourse, you forget the argument or miss it, let me state at once what I wish to suggest, nay, what I wish to assert, *there is no such thing as decay.* Decay is an intellectual Mrs. Harris, a highly useful entity wherewith the journalistic Gamps try to frighten Betsy Prig. Of course an obvious objection to my assertion is the truism that everything has a life; and that towards the end of that natural life we are correct in speaking of approaching decay. With physical phenomena, however, I am not dealing, though I may say, by the way, that there are many examples of human intellect maturing in middle life or extreme old age. William Blake's masterpiece, the illustrations to the Book of Job, were executed when he was sixty-eight, a few years before his death. The late Lord Kelvin is an example of an unimpaired intellect. Still, it must be admitted that while nations may be destroyed by conquest, or by conquering too much and becoming absorbed by the conquered, and that ancient buildings may be pulled down or restored, so, too, conventions in literature and

schools of art have been brought to an end by war, plague, or death—ostensibly brought to an end. But it is an error to suppose that art or literature, because their development was artificially arrested, were in a state of decay.

The favourite object-lesson of our childhood was the Roman Empire. 'Here's richness,' as Mr. Squeers said, here was decline, and Gibbon wrote his prose epic from that point of view. I hardly dare to differ with the greatest of English historians, but if we approach his work in the scientific spirit with which we should always regard history, we shall find that Gibbon draws false deductions from the undisputed facts, the unchallenged assertions of his history. Commencing with the Roman Empire almost in its cradle, he sees in every twist of the infant limbs prognostications of premature decline in a dispensation which by his own computation lasted over fourteen hundred years. It is safe enough to prophesy about the past. Everything I admit has a life, but I do not consider old age decay any more than I think exuberant youth immature childhood; death may be

only arrested development and life itself an exhausted convention. Have you ever tried to count the number of reasons Gibbon gives (each one is a principal reason) for the cause of Roman decline? His philosophy reminds me of Flaubert's hero, who observed that if Napoleon had been content to remain a simple soldier in the barracks at Marseilles, he might still be on the throne of France. If we really accept Gibbon's view of history, I am not surprised that any one should be nervous about the British Empire. The great intellectual idea of the Roman dominion, arrested indeed by barbarian invasion, philosophically never decayed. Some of it was embalmed in Byzantium — particularly its artistic and literary sides; its religious forces were absorbed by the Roman Church, as Hobbes pointed out in a very wonderful passage; its humanism and polity became the common property of the European nations of to-day. Gibbon's work should have been called 'The Rise and Progress of Greco-Roman Civilisation.' That is not such a good title, but it would have been more accurate. And if you compare critically the history of any manifestation of

the human intellect, religion, literature, painting, architecture, or science, you will find that the development of one expressive force has been momentarily arrested while some other manifestation is asserting itself synchronously with the supposed decay in a manifestation whose particular history you are studying. Always regard the deductions of the historian with the same scepticism that you regard the deductions of fiscal politicians.

Every one knows the charming books by writers more learned than I can pretend to be, where the history of Italian art is traced from Giotto downwards; the story of Giotto and the little lamb, now, alas! entirely exploded; of Cimabue's Madonna being carried about in processions, and now discovered to have been painted by some one else! Then on to Massaccio through the delightful fifteenth century until you see in the text-book in large print, like the flashes of harbour lights after a bad Channel crossing, RAPHAEL, MICHAEL ANGELO, DA VINCI. But when you come to the seventeenth century, Guido Reni, the Carracci, and other painters (for the present moment out of fashion), painters whose work

fetches little at Christie's, the art critic and historian begin to snivel about decay; not only of Italian art, but of the Italian peninsula; and their sobs will hardly ever allow them to get as far as Longhi, Piazetta, and Tiepolo, those great masters of the eighteenth century.

But we know, painters certainly must know if they look at old masters at all, that Tiepolo, if he was the last of the old masters, was also the first of the moderns; it was his painting in Spain which influenced Goya, and Goya is not only a deceased Spanish master, he is a European master of to-day. You can trace his influence through all the great French figure-painters of the nineteenth century down to those of the New English Art Club, though they may not have actually known they were under his influence. Painting commences with a childish naturalism, such as you see on the walls of pre-historic caves; that is why savages always prefer photographs to any work of art, and why photographers are always so savage about works of art. Gradually this childish naturalism develops into decoration; it becomes stylistic. The decoration becomes perfected and sterile; then

there arises a more sophisticated generation, longing for naturalism, for pictorial *vraisemblance*, without the childishness of the cave pictures. And their new art develops at the expense of decoration; it becomes perfect and sterile. What is commonly called decay is merely stylistic development. The exquisite art of Byzantium was wrongly considered as the debasement of Greco-Roman art. It was really the decorative expansion of it; the conventionalising of exaggerated realism. The same might have happened in Europe after the Baroque and Rococo fashions had their day; politics and commerce interfered. The intensely artificial painting of France, to which Diderot objected so much, had become perfect and sterile. Then (happily or unhappily, in whichever direction your tastes lie) the French Revolution, by a pathetic misunderstanding of classical ideals, paved the way for the naturalism of the misnamed Romantic school. We were told, a short time ago, that Sienese painting anticipated by a few years the Florentine manifestations of Cimabue and Giotto, but Mr. Berenson has pointed out that Sienese art is not the beginning but the

end of an exquisite convention, the quintessence of Byzantium. In the Roscoe collection at Liverpool you have one of the most superb and precious examples of this delicate, impeccable and decadent art: 'Christ found in the Temple,' by Simone di Martini.

In Egyptian art, again, compare the pure naturalism of the wonderful Egyptian scribe of the Louvre, belonging, I am told, to the fifth or sixth dynasty, with the hieratic and conventional art of the twelfth dynasty; while in the eighteenth dynasty you get a reversion to realism, which critics have the audacity to call a 'revival of art.' But you might just as well call it decayed, as indeed they do call some of the most magnificent Ptolemæan remains, simply because they happen to belong to a certain date which, by Egyptian reckoning, may be regarded as very recent. Just now we very foolishly talk in accents of scorn about the early Victorian art, of which I venture to remind you Turner was not the least ornament. Of course commercial and political events often interrupt the gestation of the arts, or break our idols in pieces. Another generation picks up the fragments and

puts them together in the wrong way, and that is why it is so confusing and interesting; but there is no reason to be depressed about it. Only iconoclasm need annoy us. In histories of English literature too often you find the same attitude when the writer comes to a period which he dislikes. Restoration Comedy is often said to be a period of debasement, and with Tennyson the young student is given to understand that English literature ceased altogether. But perhaps there are more modern text-books where the outlook is less gloomy. If, instead of reading the history of literature, you read the literature itself, you will find plenty of instances of writers at the most brilliant periods complaining of decay.

George Putman, in the *Art of English Poesy*, published in 1589, when English poetry was starting on a particularly glorious period, says, 'In these days all poets and poesy are despised, they are subject to scorn and derision,' and 'this proceeds through the barbarous ignorance of the time—in *other ages it was not so.*' Then Jonson, in his 'Discoveries,' lamenting the decline of literature,

says, 'It is the disease of the age, and no wonder if the world, growing old, begins to be infirm.' There are hundreds of others which will immediately occur to you, from Chaucer to Tennyson, though Pope made noble protests on behalf of his contemporaries. You have only got to compare these lachrymose observations with the summary of the year's literature in any newspaper—'literary output' is the detestable expression always used—and you will find the same note of depression. 'The year has not produced a single masterpiece. Glad as we have been to welcome Mr. Blank's verse, "Larkspurs" cannot be compared with his first delicious volume, "Tealeaves," published thirty years ago.' Then turn to the review in the same paper of 'Tealeaves' thirty years ago. 'Coarse animalism draped in the most seductive hues of art and romance, we will not analyse these poems, we will not even pretend to give the reasons on which our opinion is based.' Or read the incisive 'Musings without Method,' in *Blackwood's Magazine*, on contemporary literature and contemporary things generally.

Again, every painter is told that his work

is not as good as last year, and that we have no one like Titian or Velasquez. The Royal Academy is always said to be worse than usual. I have known the summer exhibitions at Burlington House for twenty years. Let me assure you throughout that period they have always been quite as bad as they are now. But we do not want painters like Titian or Velasquez; we want something else. If painters were like Titian or Velasquez they would not be artists at all. When Velasquez went to Rome he was told he ought to imitate Raphael; had he done so should we regard him as the greatest painter in the world? If Rossetti had merely been another Fra Angelico or one of the early artists from whom he derived such noble inspiration, should we regard him as we do, as even the fierce young modern art student does, as one of the greatest figures in English art of the nineteenth century? In the latter part of that century I think he is the greatest force in English painting. I would reserve for him the largest print in my manual of English art. But have we declined since the death of Rossetti? On the contrary, I think we have advanced and are

advancing. You must not think I am depreciating the past. The past is one of my witnesses. The past was very like our present; it nearly always depreciated itself intellectually and materially.

We all of us think of Athens in the fifth century as a golden period of great men, when every genius was appreciated, but you know that they put Pheidias in prison. And take the instance of Euripides. The majority of his countrymen said he was nothing to the late Aeschylus. He was chiefly appreciated by foreigners, as you will remember if you are able to read 'Balaustion's Adventure' (so much more difficult than Euripides in the original Greek). Listen to what Professor Murray says:—

His contemporary public denounced him as dull, because he tortured them with personal problems; as malignant, because he made them see truths they wished not to see; as blasphemous and foul-minded, because he made demands on their religious and spiritual natures which they could neither satisfy nor overlook. They did not know whether he was too wildly imaginative or too realistic, too romantic or too prosaic, too childishly simple or too philosophical—Aristophanes says he was all these things at once. They only knew that he made

them angry and that they could not help listening to him.

Does not that remind you a little of what was said all over England of Mr. Bernard Shaw? Of what is still said about him in many London houses to-day? If some one praises him, the majority of people will tell you that he is overrated. Does it not remind you of the reception which Ibsen's plays met when they were first produced here: when they gave an impetus to that new English drama which I understand is decaying, though it seems to me to be only beginning—the new English Drama of Mr. Granville Barker, Mr. Housman, Mr. Arnold Bennett, Mr. Galsworthy, and Mr. Masefield?

Every year the patient research of scholars by the consultation of original documents has caused us to readjust our historical perspective. Those villains of our childhood, Tiberius, Richard III., Mary Tudor, and others, have become respectable monarchs, almost model monarchs, if you compare them with the popular English view of the present King of the Belgians, the ex-Sultan of Turkey, and the present Czar of Russia. It is realised

that contemporary journalism gave a somewhat twopence coloured impression of Kings and Queens, who were only creatures of their age, less admirable expressions of the individualism of their time. And just as historical facts require readjustment by posterity, so our critical estimate of intellectual and æsthetic evolution requires strict revision. We must not accept the glib statement of the historian, especially of the contemporary historian, that at certain periods intellectual activity and artistic expression were decaying or did not exist. If a convention in one field of intellectual activity is said by the historian or chronicler to be approaching termination or to be decaying, as he calls it, we should test carefully his data and his credentials. But, assuming he is right, there will always be found some compensating reaction in another sphere of intellectual activity which is in process of development; and through which, by some divine alchemy, providence, or nature, call it what you will, a new manifestation will be made to the world. The arts which we suppose to have perished, of which, indeed, we write affecting epitaphs, are merely hiber-

nating; the intellect which is necessary for their production and nutrition is simply otherwise employed; while, of course, you must make allowances for the appreciations of posterity, change of fashion and taste. From the middle of the sixteenth century down to nearly the middle of the nineteenth, the Middle Ages were always thought of as the Dark Ages. Scarcely any one could appreciate either the pictorial art or architecture of mediævalism; those who did so always had to apologise for their predilection. The wonders of Gothic art were furtively relished by a few antiquaries; and, at certain periods, by men like Beckford and Walpole, as agreeable drawing-room curiosities. The Romantic movement commenced by Chatterton enabled us to revise a limited and narrow view, based on insufficient information. It was John Ruskin, in England, who made us see what a splendid heritage the Middle Ages had bequeathed to us. Ruskin and his disciples then fell into the error of turning the tables on the Renaissance, and regarded everything that deviated from Gothic convention as *debased;* the whole art of the eighteenth century

was anathema to them. The decadence began, according to Ruskin, with Raphael. Out of that ingenious error, or synchronous with it, began the brilliant movement of the Pre-Raphaelites in the middle of the last century. And when the Pre-Raphaelites appeared, every one said the end of Art had arrived. Dickens openly attacked them; Thackeray ridiculed the new tendencies; every one, great and small, spoke of decay and decline. The French word *Décadence* had not crept into use. However, the weary Titan staggered on, as Matthew Arnold said, and when Mr. Whistler's art dawned on the horizon, Ruskin was among the first to see in it signs of decay. Except the poetry of Swinburne, never has any art met with such abuse. An example of the immortal painter now adorns the National Gallery of *British* painting, which is cared for—oh, irony of circumstances—by one of the first prophets of impressionism in this country, or, rather, let me say, one of the first English critics—Mr. D. S. MacColl.

But you will now ask how do I account for those periods when apparently the liberal arts

are supposed not to have existed? I maintain they did exist, or that human intellect was otherwise employed. The excavations of prehistoric cities are evidences of my contention. Because things are destroyed we must not say they have decayed; if evidences are scarce, do not say they never existed. Our architecture, for example, took five hundred years to develop out of the splendid Norman through the various transitions of Gothic down to the perfection of the English country house in Elizabethan aud Jacobean times. If church architecture was decaying, domestic architecture was improving. *Architecture is, of course, the first and most important of all the arts,* and when the human intellect is being used up for some other purpose there is a temporary cessation; there is never any decay of architecture. The putting up of ugly buildings is merely a sign of growing stupidity, not of declining intellect or decaying taste. Jerry-building is the successful competition of dishonesty against competency. Do not imagine that because the good architects do not get commissions to put up useful or beautiful buildings they do not exist. The history of

stupidity and the history of bad taste must one day engage our serious attention. There is no decay, alas, even in stupidity and bad taste.

The suddenness with which the literature of the sixteenth century developed in England has been explained, I know, by the Reformation. But you should remember the other critics of art, who ascribe the barrenness of our painting and the necessity of importing continental artists, also to the Reformation. I suggest that the intellectual capacity of the nation was directed towards literature, politics and *religious* controversy, rather than to art and religion. I cannot think there was any scarcity of the artistic germ in the English nation which had already expressed itself in the great Abbeys and Churches, such as Glastonbury, Tintern, Fountains, and York. And you must remember that the minor art of embroidery, the '*opus anglicanum*' (which flourished for three centuries previous to the Reformation), was famous throughout Europe.

In the middle of the eighteenth century, the big men, Swift, Pope, and Addison, having passed away, the Augustan age of English literature seemed exhausted. It was a time

of intellectual dyspepsia; every one was much too fond of ruins; people built sham ruins on their estates. Rich men, who could afford the luxury, kept a dilapidated hermit in a cavern. Their chief pleasure on the continent was measuring ruins in the way described so amusingly by Goldsmith in *The Citizen of the World.* Though no century was more thoroughly pleased with itself, I might almost say smugly self-satisfied, the men of that century were always lamenting the decline of the age. The observations of Johnson and Goldsmith I need scarcely repeat. But here is one which may have escaped your notice. It is not a suggestion of decline, but an assertion of non-existence. Gray, the poet, the cultivated connoisseur, the Professor of History, writing in 1763 to Count Algarrotti, says: 'Why this nation has made no advances hitherto in painting and sculpture it is hard to say; the fact is undeniable, and we have the vanity to apologise for ourselves as Virgil did for the Romans:

> Excudent alii spirantia mollius aera,
> Credo equidem, vivos ducent de marmore vultus,
> Orabunt causas melius, coelique meatus

Describent radio, et surgentia sidera dicent:
Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento;
Hae tibi erunt artes; pacisque imponere morem,
Parcere subjectis, et debellare superbos.

'You are generous enough to wish, and sanguine enough to see that art shall one day flourish in England. *I too much wish, but can hardly extend my hopes so far.*' Yet in 1754 Chippendale had published his Cabinet Makers' Guide; and the next fifty years was to see the production of all that beautiful English furniture of which we are so justly proud, and which we forge with such surprising skill. It was the next fifty years that saw the production of the beautiful English pottery which we prize so highly, and it was the next hundred years that was to be the period of Reynolds, Gainsborough, Lawrence, Crome, Cotman, Alfred Stevens, and Turner, who died in 1851, just when the Pre-Raphaelites were supposed to be inaugurating the decay of that which Gray denied the existence, nearly one hundred years before.

Though the scope of my discussion is limited to literature and art, it would be paltry to confine our inquiries within limited

horizons. Painting and architecture, alas, are not the whole of life; the fine arts are only the flowers of existence; they are useful as humanising elements; but they are not indispensable. That vague community among whom we arbitrarily place those with whom we disagree—the Philistines—get on very well without them. But even Philistines have to reckon with Religion and Science, and in a lesser degree with Philosophy. That powerful trinity affects our every-day life. Philosophy is so cloistered, so difficult to understand, that we seldom hear of its decay; though we are constantly told that some branch of science is being neglected, or owing to a religious revival that its prestige is becoming undermined; its truths are becoming falsehoods. I am not a man of science, not even a student, only a desultory reader. Yet I suggest that, as was pointed out in the case of the fine arts, certain branches of the divine scholarship, if I may call it so, may be arrested temporarily in any development they may have reached. Let us take medicine. Medicine is primarily based upon the study of anatomy or structure—physiology—or the

scheme of structure carried out in life; and upon botany and chemistry as representing the vegetable and mineral worlds where the remedies are sought. Anatomy soon reaches a finite position, when a sufficient number of careful dissections has been made; the other divisions used to look like promising endless development; but there is reason to suppose that they too, as far as medicine is concerned, have reached a sterile perfection.

The microscope is perfected up to a point which mechanicians think cannot be improved upon; so that those ultimate elements of physiology which depend upon the observation of minute structure are known to us. To put it crudely, we cannot discover any more germs, whose presence is hidden from us by mere minuteness, unless we can improve our machinery, and that, we are told, is an improbable event. I will not labour the point by applying it to botany, which is very obvious, or to chemistry, where it is not so clear. But it *is* clear that owing to a feeling that not much more is to be got from minute observation with the tools at our disposal, the brightest intellects and most inventive

clairvoyant work are shunted into more imaginative channels. There are no men who guess so brilliantly as men of science, so that science, in that respect, has attained the dignity of Theology. I suppose that the startling theories propounded by Sir Oliver Lodge and others will be taken as evidence of the decay of science. But the human intellect, especially if it is scientific, cannot, I imagine, like actors, go on repeating or feigning the same emotion. It must leave for the moment as apparently completed one branch of knowledge to which it may return again after developing some less mature branch on which the attention of the most learned investigators is for a time wholly concentrated. The tree of knowledge is an evergreen, and in science, no more than in arts, is there any decay. When Darwin published his great *Origin of Species* which was hailed as a revelation, not only by scientific men, but by intelligent laymen, religious people became very much alarmed. They talked about the decay of faith, and ascribed any falling off in the offertories to the shillings spent on visiting the monkey-house at the Zoological Gardens.

Younger sons and less gifted members of clever families were no longer destined for Holy Orders; as we were descended from apes it would have seemed impious. They were sent to Cambridge to pursue a so-called scientific career, which was crowned by the usual ægrotat in botany instead of a pass in history. The falling off in candidates for Holy Orders seriously alarmed some of our Bishops; and Darwin—the gentle, delightful Darwin—became what the Pope had been to our ancestors. I need not point out how groundless these fears happily proved to be. The younger intellects of the country simply became more interested for the moment in the cross-breeding of squirrels, than in the internecine difficulties of the Protestant church on Apostolic succession, the number of candles on the altar, and the legality of incense. Now, I rejoice to say, there is a healthy revival of interest and a healthy difference of opinion on all these important religious questions. We must never pay serious attention to the alarmists who tell us that the churches and sects are seeing their last days. Macaulay has warned us never to be too sanguine about the

Church of Rome. The moments of her greatest trials produced some of her greatest men — Ignatius Loyola, Philip Neri, and Francis Xavier. Do you think the Church is decaying because the congregations are banished from France, and the Concordat has come to an end? I tell you it will only stimulate her to further conquests; it is the beginning of a new life for the Catholic Church in France. If the Anglican Church were to be disestablished to-morrow, I would regard it as a Sandow exercise for the hardworking, splendid intellects of the Establishment. The Nonconformists—well, they never talk about their own decline; of all the divisions of Christianity they always seem to me heartily to enjoy persecution; and like myself, I never knew them to admit the word *décadence* into their vocabulary, at least about themselves. I hold them up to you as examples. Let us all be Nonconformists in that respect.

I do not ask you to adopt the habit against which Matthew Arnold directed one of his witty essays, the habit of expressing a too unctuous satisfaction with the age and time in which we are living. That was the

intellectual error of the Eighteenth Century. There are problems of poverty, injustice, disease, and unhappiness, which should make the most prosperous and most selfish of us chafe; but I do urge that we should not suspect the art and literature of our time, the intellectual manifestations of our age, whether scientific or literary. I urge that we do not sit on the counter in order to cry 'stinking fish,' and observe that this is merely an age of commerce. An overweening modesty in us seems to persuade us that it is quite impossible we should be fortunate enough to be the contemporaries of great men. The fact that we know them personally sometimes undermines our faith; contemporary contempt for a great man is too often turned on the contemporaries. Do not let us look upon genius, as Schopenhauer accused some people of doing, 'as upon a hare which is good to eat when it has been killed and dressed up, but so long as it is alive only good to be shot at.' And if our intellectuals are not all Brobdingnagians, they are not all Liliputians. It seems to me ungenerous to make sweeping and deprecating assertions about our own time; it is also dangerous.

The contemporary praise of unworthy work, ephemeral work—there is always plenty of that, we know—is forgotten; and (though it does not decay) perishes with the work it extolled. But unsound criticism and foolish abuse of great work is remembered to the confusion of the critics. Think of the reception accorded to Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Keats, Shelley, Rossetti, and Swinburne.

I remember that excellent third-rate writer, W. E. H. Lecky, making a speech at a dinner of the Authors' Society, in which he said that he was sorry to say there were no great writers alive, and no stylists to compare with those who had passed away. A few paces off him sat Walter Pater, George Meredith, and Mr. Austin Dobson. Tennyson, though not present at the banquet, was president of the Society, and Ruskin was still alive. When Swinburne's 'Atalanta in Calydon' appeared, another third-rate writer, James Russell Lowell, assured the world that its author was no poet, because there was no thought in the verse. Four years ago, at a provincial town in Italy, when one of the Italian ministers, at the opening of some public

building, said that united Italy owed to the great English poet Swinburne a debt which it could never forget, the inhabitants cheered vociferously. This was no idle compliment; every one in Italy knows who Swinburne was. I will not hazard to guess the extent of the ovation which the names of Lowell and Lecky would receive, but I think the incident is a fair sign that English poetry has not decayed.

In the *Daily Mail* I saw once an interview with an inferior American black-and-white draughtsman at Berlin. He was asked his opinion about a splendid exhibition of old English pictures being held there, and took occasion to say 'what the pictures demonstrate is not that the English women of the eighteenth century were conspicuously lovely, but the artists who painted them possessed secrets of reproduction which posterity has failed to inherit.' I would like to reply 'Rot, rot, rot;' but that would imply a belief in decay. I suggest to the same critic that he should visit one of the 'International Exhibitions,' where he will see the pictures of Mr. Charles Hazelwood Shannon. Such a stupid view from an

American is particularly amazing, because in Mr. John Singer Sargent, we (by *we* I mean America and ourselves) possess an artist who is certainly the peer of Gainsborough and Reynolds, and personally I should say a much greater painter than Reynolds. A hundred years hence, perhaps people at Berlin (the most critical and cultivated capital in the world) will be bending before the 'Three Daughters of Percy Wyndham,' the 'Duchess of Sutherland,' the 'Marlborough Family,' and many another masterpiece of Mr. Sargent and Mr. Charles Shannon. The same American critic says that our era of mediocrity will continue; so I am full of hope. Even the existence of America does not depress me; nor do I see in it a symptom of decay; if it produces much that is distasteful in the way of tinned meat, it gave us Mr. John Sargent and Mr. Henry James, and it took away from England Mr. Richard Le Gallienne.

I should be the last to invite you not to discriminate about the present. We must be cautious in estimating the very popular writers or painters of our time; but we must not

dismiss them because they are popular. We should be tall enough to worship in a crowd. Let our criticism be aristocratic, our taste fastidious, and let our sympathies be democratic and catholic. Dickens, I suppose, is one of the most popular writers who ever lived, and yet he is part of the structure of our literature; but as Dickens is dead, I prefer to mention the names of three living writers, who are also popular, and have become corner-stones of the same building—Mr. Thomas Hardy, Mr. Rudyard Kipling, Mr. H. G. Wells. 'There are at all times,' says Schopenhauer, 'two literatures in progress running side by side, but little known to each other; the one real, the other only apparent. The former grows into permanent literature: it is pursued by those who live *for* science or poetry. The other is pursued by those who live *on* science or poetry; but after a few years one asks where are they? where is the glory that came so soon and made so much clamour?' We are happy if we can discriminate between those two literatures.

While we should remember that there are at all times intellects whose work is

more for posterity than for the present; work which appeals, perhaps, only to the few, that of artists whose work has no purchasers, writers whose books may have publishers but few readers, we must be cautious about accepting the verdict of the dove-cot. There are many obscure artists and writers whose work, though admired by a select few, remains very properly obscure, and will always remain obscure; it is of no value intellectually; the world should know nothing of its inferior men. Sometimes, however, it is these inferior men who are able to get temporary places as critics, and inform us in leading articles that ours is an age of *Decadence*. Every new drama, every work of art which possesses individuality or gives a fresh point of view or evinces development of any kind, is held up as an instance of Decay. '*L'école décadent*' was a phrase invented as a jest in 1886, I believe by Monsieur Bourde, a journalist in Paris. It was eagerly adopted by the Parisians, and soon floated across the Channel. Used as a term of reproach, it was accepted by the group of poets it was intended to ridicule. I need not remind you that the master of that school

was Paul Verlaine, the immortal poet who enlarged the scope of French verse — the poet who achieved for French poetry what I am told the so-called decadent philosopher Nietzsche has done for German prose. Unfortunately I do not know German, and it seems almost impossible to add to the German language. But Nietzsche, I am assured by competent authorities, has performed a similar feat to that of Luther on the issue of his Bible.

When, therefore, we hear of decadence in literature or art, even if we accept Mr. Balfour's definition of its symptom—'*the employment of an over-wrought technique*'—we must remember that Decadence and Decay have now different meanings, though originally they meant the same sort of thing. An over-wrought technique is characteristic of the decadent school of France, particularly of Mallarmé, and some of our own decadents, Walter Pater and Sir Thomas Browne. The existence of writers adopting an over-wrought technique, however, is not (and Mr. Balfour would repudiate the idea) a sign of decay as commonplace moralists would have us believe,

but of realised perfection. Pater is the most perfect prose writer we ever produced. The Euphuists of the sixteenth century were of course decadents, and I think you will admit that they did not herald any decay in our literature.

The truth is that men after a certain age, if not on the crest of the waves themselves, become bored with counting the breakers, and decide that the tide is going out. You must often have had arguments with friends on this subject when walking by the sea. The water seems to be receding; you can see that there is an ebb; and then an unusually long wave comes up and wets your feet. Great writers are guilty of a similar error without any intention of contriving a literary conceit (as I suspect many a past outcry to have been). Even Pater declared that he would not disturb himself by reading any contemporary literature published by an author who did not exist before 1870. He never read Stevenson or Kipling. Now that is a terrible state to be in; it is a symptom of premature old age; not physical but mental old age.

The art of the present day is not archi-

tecture, painting, or literature. It is the art of remaining young. It is the art of life. It is a science. The fairer, the stronger, the better sex—shall I call its members our equals or our superiors ?—have always realised this. Indeed, they have employed ingenious mechanical contrivances for arresting the march of time or that physical decay of which we are all victims. Sometimes they may be said to have indulged in an over-wrought technique, which may be the reason why we are told that every woman is at heart a decadent. Otto Weininger certainly thought so. I have always regretted that the male sex was precluded by prejudice from following their example. I regret somewhat acutely the desuetude of the periwig.

So we can take an example from women—they are so often our theme, let them be our examples in a symbolical sense. If we choose, we too can remain young intellectually, sensitive to new impressions, new impulses and new revelations, whether of science or art. The Greeks of the fifth century, and even of the age of St. Paul, preserved their youth by cultivating the superb gift of curiosity, delightful anxiety

about the present and future. William Morris once described the Whigs as careless of the past, ignorant of the present, and fearful of the future. Whatever your politics are, do not be like the Whigs as described by William Morris. Cultivate a feminine curiosity. I used to be told the old story of Blue Beard as a warning against that particular failing. I see in it a much profounder moral. It is the emancipation of woman; and asserts her right, if not to vote, at least to be curious. Her curiosity rid the world of a monster, and in her curiosity we see the nucleus of the new drama. That little blood-stained key unlocked for us the cupboard where the family skeleton had been left too long in the cold; it was time that he joined the festive board, or, at least, appeared on the boards; and now, I am glad to say, he has done so; and he is called new-fangled. Do not let us call things 'new-fangled.' New-fangled medicine probably saves fifty per cent. of the population from premature death. Do not speak of the 'crudity of youth.' Youth is sometimes crude. It is better than being rude. It is an error to mock at the single

virtue a possible offender may possess. I observe that men of science remain younger intellectually, and even physically, than artists or men of letters. I believe it is because to them science is always full of surprises and fresh impressions. They know there is practically no end to their knowledge; and that in the study of science there is no decay, whatever they may detect in the crust of the earth or on the face of heaven. They are never satisfied with the past. They look to youth and its enthusiasms for realising their own dreams and developing their own hypotheses. And as there are great men of science to-day, so, too, there are great men of letters, great poets, and great painters, some of whose names you may not have heard. But when you do hear of them I beg of you not to regard any of them as symptoms of decay, even if their technique is elaborate and over-wrought. The *early* work of every modern painter is over-elaborate and over-wrought, just as all the work of early painters is over-elaborate and over-wrought. Do not greet the dawn as though it were a lowering sunset. Listen, and, with William Blake, you may

hear the sons of God shouting for joy. If your mind is bent on decay, read that neglected poet, Byron. He thought the romantic movement, of which he became the accidental centre, a symptom of decay. Read any period of history and its literature, and you will find the same cry reiterated. When you have read an old book go out and buy a new one. When you have sold your old masters, go out and buy new masters. Aladdin's maid is one of the wronged characters of legend. . . . Of the Pierian spring there are many fountains. Yet it is a spring which never runs dry; though it flows with greater freedom at one season than at another, with greater volume from one fountain than some other. In the glens of Parnassus there are hidden flowers always blooming; though, to the binoculars of the tourist, the mountain seems unusually barren. You will find that youth does not vanish with the rose, that you need never close the sweet-scented manuscript of love, science, art or literature. In them youth returns like daffodils that come before the swallow dares, and take the winds of March with beauty: or like the snapdragons which

THERE IS NO DECAY

Cardinal Newman saw blossoming on the wall at Oxford, and which became for him the symbol of hope. For us they may stand as the symbol of realisation and the immortality of the human intellect, in which there has been no decay since the days of Tubal Cain.

To J. G. Legge, Esq.

PRINTED BY STRANGEWAYS AND SONS, TOWER STREET
CAMBRIDGE CIRCUS, LONDON, W.C.

6518

JUN 15 1992